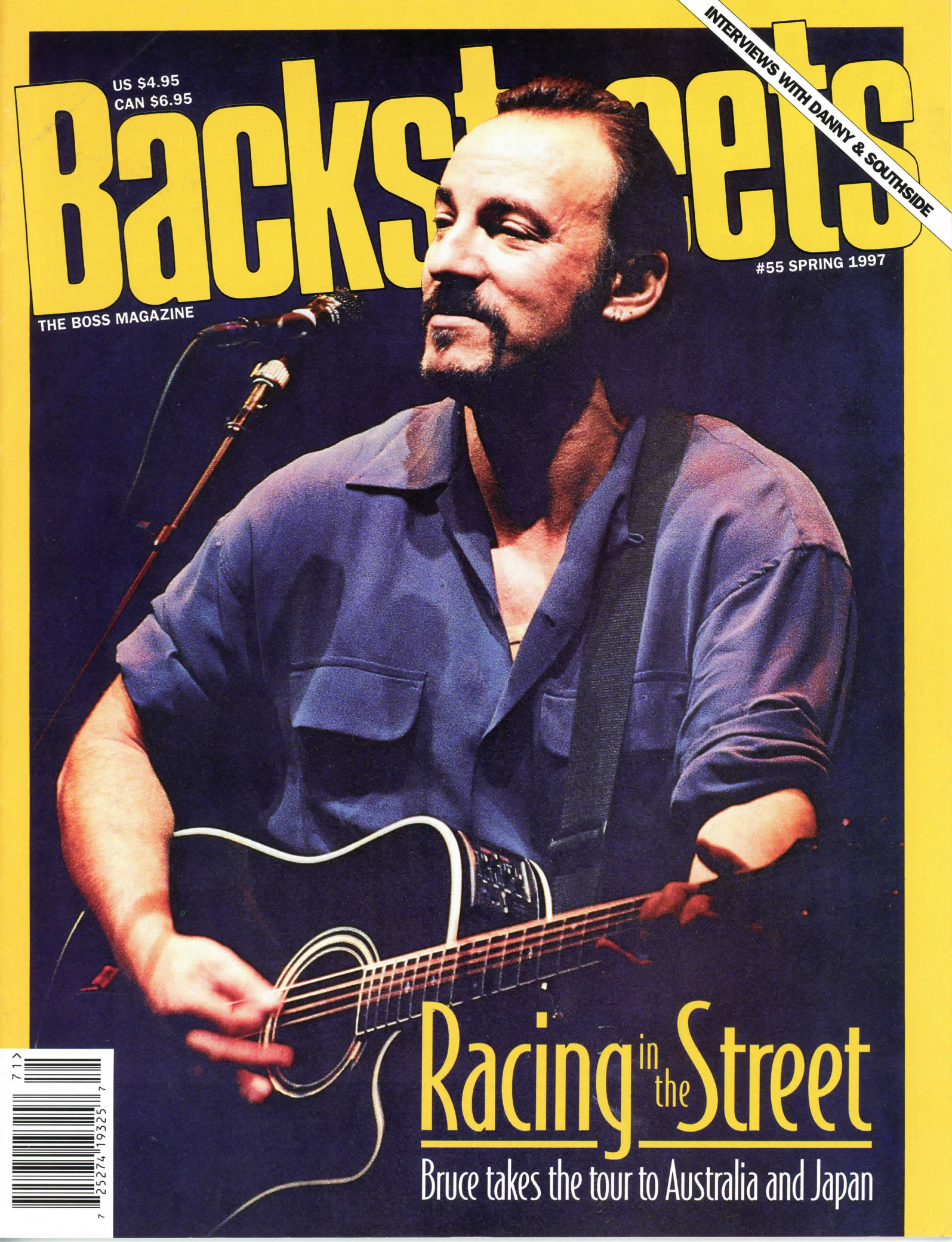
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#55 SPRING 1997
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Bruce takes the tour to Australia and Japan
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joad tour shirts and more

All officially licensed Springsteen merchandise sold on the solo acoustic tour!

•JOAD TOURBOOK The tourbook for the World Acoustic Tour '95-'96 is finally available! Bruce had been on the road for the better part of a year before this was finally issued on the current fall leg, and for anyone who missed it on tour, the new tourbook is exclusively available through Backstreet Records! It's a beautiful 32-page book, very colorful and packed with photos (including many shots of Bruce only found in this book), plus song lyrics, an interview with Bruce, and Steve Sutherland's story on the tour from *New Musical Express*. This is the official item, a fantastic souvenier.....$20

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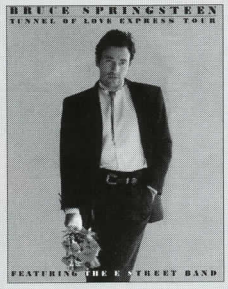

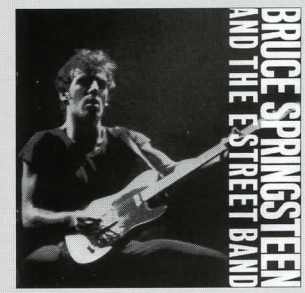

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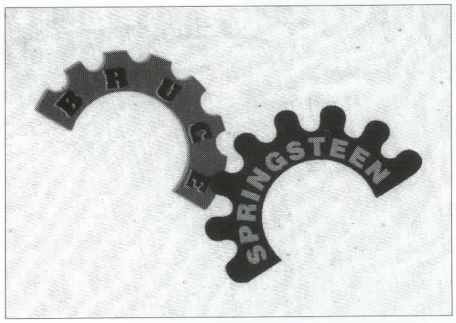
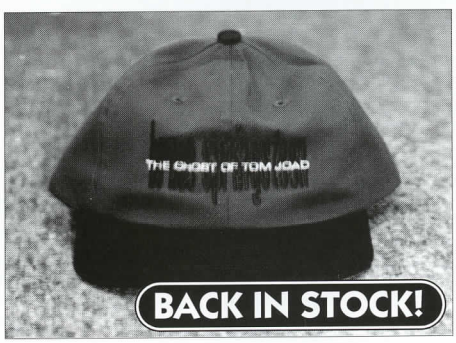
•HENLEY SHIRT A brown longsleeve henley shirt with three buttons, with "Bruce Springsteen: Ghost of Tom Joad" embroidery on the left front chest. Shown left at top. Available once again in both Large and XL....$30



•DENIM SHIRT NEW! Probably the nicest item sold on tour, this is a sturdy, light-blue denim work shirt with a subtle design over the left front pocket: the "gear" logo, designed by Bruce himself. Two interlocking gears—one says "Bruce" and the other says "Springsteen"—embroidered in red, green, white and black. We've been trying to get these shirts ever since the tour started, and they're now available in Large, XL and a few XXL too!.....$40

•JOAD T-SHIRT #1 A nice gray garment-dyed t-shirt, with "Bruce Springsteen: Ghost of Tom Joad" silkscreened on the left front chest. On the back is an illustration of a highway heading into the distance, "The Highway is Alive Tonight." Back and front shown at left. Large and XL....$20

•JOAD T-SHIRT #2 NEW! Another new style, this is a "natural" t-shirt, basically a cream color, with the "gears" logo on the front pocket area mcuh like the denim shirt (though here it's silkscreened rather than embroidered). The back of the shirt lists the cities of the initial leg of the tour, Los Angeles through Boston, in the black Joad type. Available in Large and XL.....$20



•JOAD CAP A two-toned baseball cap, olive green top with a black brim, with nice "Bruce Springsteen: Ghost of Tom Joad" embroidery, a sharp cap pictured bottom left.....$16

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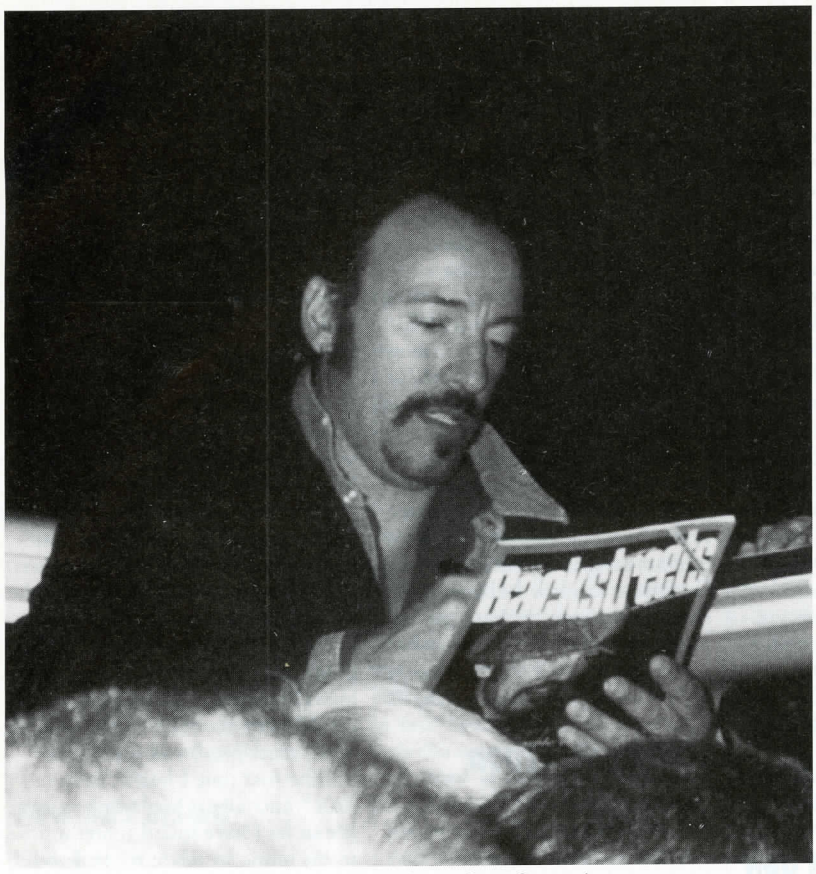

ROBERT BADER PHOTO

Bruce catches up on his reading after a show.

Backstreets

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CONTENTS

SPRING 1997
#55 Vol. 14, No. 3
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FEATURES

A MOVEABLE FEAST
The Southside Johnny Interview. Southside speaks from the City of Lights. By Jean-Marc Bouineau and Roger Goulet **12**

MY HOMETOWN
The Danny Federici Interview. With the release of *Flemington,* Danny takes a good look around. By Robert Makin. **14**

RACING IN THE STREET
The *Tom Joad* tour continues in the US, Japan and Australia. **16**

CLOSE ENCOUNTERS
...of the Bruce Kind. **26**

MANSION ON THE HILL
An exclusive *Backstreets* interview with Fred Goodman, author of *Mansion on the Hill.* **28**

DEPARTMENTS

LETTERS
To the editors of *Backstreets*. **4**

ON THE BACKSTREETS
A Million Miles Away. By Charles R. Cross. **6**

ON LIPS
"Secret Garden" meets Howard Stern. **7**

GREETINGS FROM ASBURY PARK
Notes from the Shore. By Robert Makin. **8**

ON DISC
New tour editon discs and more. **9**

IN THE NEWS
Springsteen stays busy after Oz. **10**

ON COLLECTING
Lost Masters wrap-up, *Live* box outtakes. **30**

CLASSIFIEDS
Pen pals, messages, and tapes. **33**

COVER

BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN
11/24/96 Asbury Park, NJ
Mark R. Sullivan Photo

OFF THE WALL

BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN
10/19/96 Albuquerque, NM
Robert S. Bader Photo

LETTERS

BREAK ON THROUGH

Dear Editor:

I read the news today (oh boy) about Bruce's future plans. Please, Jon Landau, now is the time to exert your influence much like in 1983.

I wholeheartedly applauded the beautiful honesty of *Tunnel of Love* (which I think is his best album). I accepted the musical defense mechanism of *Human Touch*. I raved about the touching sentimentality and the honest human touch of *Lucky Town*. I was awed by the courage of *Tom Joad*, which is as solid a record as he as ever made.

The esssence of Bruce Springsteen's career, and the intangible that ultimately sets in him in a class by himself, is his ability to respond artistically to questions or challenges to his music, to his life, to his country. Now the challenge that faces Springsteen, much as it faced him as he sat in the dark shadows of the isolation of *Nebraska*, is "okay, we got the culprit, what are you gonna do about it?"

Landau encouraged him to make the right decision in 1983: let's expose that sucker with *loud noise*, invite everybody along to the hanging, and then have a big party.

Bruce, leave the garage in LA alone this time around. Please. Rock 'n' roll does matter. Reject the isolation and get the damn band and let's get it on with it. We need to see that Bruce Springsteen, having so courageously fingered the enemy once again, can lead a universal caravan of hope and dignity and faith. To do any less would be an insult to your fans, and to the scope and reach and courageousness that has been your career to this point.

Throughout civilized history art has served as a tool for people to understand their lives. A lot of nice moments but no history is being made in a run down theatre in Youngstown.

You once said that what mattered was not how many people got the music, but how many people "got" the music.

Nobody's gonna get it if you don't give it.

David Billotti
Los Angeles, CA

HELD UP WITHOUT A GUN

Dear Editor:

First off, congratulations on the 1996 Music Journalism Award. It is well deserved—*Backstreets* is a great publication, with fine writing and excellent reporting. I enjoy reading every issue cover to cover.

However, in issue #53 the article on the *Lost Masters* raises some serious questions that are only briefly addressed. The article states, "Never before have collectors been invited into the rehearsal room." Well, they still haven't been invited. Some thief appropriated these tapes, ripped off photos and images from other sources, and developed an inaccuarte numbering system.

If Bruce never intended his band to hear certain tapes, then he certainly wasn't prepared for these pirates. Would you be upset if all the early drafts of the *Backstreets* book showed up in print with misspellings and typographical errors? To give any type of positive review to this set endorses this lowest form of thievery, and I believe you should condemn this specific set in the strongest possible terms.

Tom McManus
Waukegan, IL

LOST IN THE FLOOD

Dear Editor:

I wish I could still share in the spiritual release and revival that used to be *sui generis* of Bruce concerts. I'm talking about the sheer jumping joy of his music and the sweetness—there's no other word for it—of those in the audience.

Well, it's gone. No use crying about Bruce transcending his cult. More power to him for having such a diverse audience. After all, isn't diversity the touchstone of American democracy these days, in all its glorious, if occasionally untidy and pushy, plentitude?

But his December 12, 1995 Beacon Theatre concert in New York was a pretty sour experience almost from beginning to end. I'm not going to enumerate all the transgressions of simple courtesy—to both the artist and all those sitting near the louts—I heard and witnessed. The dead-on "Moron Factor" you described seems to have become an inescapable ingredient of his concerts, and although I thought Bruce himself was excellent, my time at the Beacon was ruined by those my fellow audience members, Kevin and Charlotte, wrote about in *Backstreets* #52.

Having said that, I'm obligated to add that his Asbury Park show this past November, for which I gave a scalper the equivalent of a paycheck, was simply a mighty performance. Bruce and the audience were in (mostly) perfect sync, and it was worth the phone disconnection and landlord ire that I incurred.

Locker McCarthy
Westport, CT

LOVE'S LIKE THAT

Dear Editor:

I just had to write and comment on the January 26th *New York Times Magazine* article on Bruce written by Nicholas Dawidoff. So many times over the years people have asked me: Why? Why Bruce? What is it about the man and his music? My answer has been that if you have to ask then you just don't get it—it's not something I could explain so that people would understand. Bruce summed it up in one paragraph, part of which said how he aimed to create an audience he could sing to over a lifetime. Well, that's me; I was seven years old the first time I heard "Born to Run," and at each phase in my life so far I have found something in his music to relate to. In good times and bad his music is always a constant.

The other thing that struck me was how Bruce said that he set out to find an audience that would be a reflection of some imagined community that he had in his head and lived according to the values in his music and shared a similar set of ideals. I had never seen it in black and white before. Now when someone wants to know what I mean by "getting it," I'll have them read that and let what Bruce said speak for itself.

Cindy Veillette
Beacon Falls, CT

WILD WIND BLOWING

Dear Editor:

Of all the publications covering the exclusive Freehold show, I figured you guys would have mentioned the 50 or so fans—the non-Freehold residents, but diehard fans—that stood outside in the rain to listen.

My friend and I arrived shortly after the show started. The whole town was so quiet—it was so awesome to think that Springsteen was singing in a small building on this sleepy Friday night!

We stood outside and heard the whole show perfectly (except

SPITTIN' FIRE

This official new Southside Johnny album is his first in four years—since 1993's *Better Days*—and it's been released in France only! *Spittin' Fire* is a double album, 2CDs of live acoustic material taken from a ten-night run at the Chesterfield Cafe in Paris. Southside and his stripped-down band ran through a great mix of classics, covers, and new material, with 19 of the best tracks collected here. The set includes a number of Springsteen songs, like "The Fever" and "Fade Away," plus covers like "Wild Horses" and "Hoochie Coochie Man." Lots of Southside standards include "It's Been a Long Time," "Trapped Again," and "I Don't Want to Go Home," plus the new "Blue Radio." There's even an unlisted bonus track, "Havin' a Party," at the end of the set. The sound is fantastic—this is an official release—and the performances top-notch. Tough to find, but available now as an import from Backstreet Records.....$25

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for some of Bruce's dialogue). We stood outside in the wind, and then it started to rain really hard. But it did not dampen anybody's spirit. We all stood outside singing, laughing and enjoying ourselves, in a very calm manner. The bouncers were for the most part pretty cool and chased some of the rowdies away.

After the show my friend and I (now soaked through to the skin) waited for more than an hour for Bruce. He came out, shook hands and waved to all of us before being driven away into the stormy night.

No, I'm not from Freehold. I was born in New York City and recently relocated to the Jersey shore. That's where it's best to see a Springsteen show. That's where my heart is. And no matter what the weather, that's where my body will be.

Diane Portantiere
Bradley Beach, NJ

NEW DAY RISING

Dear Editor:

Your latest issue, #54, is just superb. *Backstreets* should win every fanzine award, in my opinion, and I've been with you since issue six.

In the last few years I must admit I've found my interest in Bruce waning as I've encountered other artists that I appreciate more, like Bob Mould, My Bloody Valentine (Kevin Shields), Sebadoh, Guided By Voices and Foo Fighters. I just felt Bruce had lost his ability to communicate in a pure artistic sense. There was no edge there—he didn't believe in a lot of his material, in my opinion. Listen to Nirvana's *Nevermind* album and tell me both *Human Touch* and *Lucky Town* don't seem pedestrian by comparison.

We all know the saying about hindsight, but perhaps if Bruce had compiled a single album then—imagine the best 12 of the 24 songs he released on one record! Perhaps if he took the opportunity to work with different producers as well as new musicians (think Lou Giordano, or even Steve Albini). Or he could have simply chosen to give some of those songs greater resonance by arranging them in the manner of his performances at the Christic Institute Benefit shows. I mean, the released "Real World" sounds more like Elton John than Bruce.

"Streets of Philadelphia" surprised me. An amazing song. I was convinced that Bruce had regained his focus and edge when I heard the 12/95 Philadelphia broadcast—humour, grit and honest vision were there in abundance. All right!

The revelations found within the *Lost Masters* series have also invigorated my renewed interest. Damn, can this guy can write songs! I hope that someday the best of these will see official release, because they deserve to be heard. By the way, the "Doll House" and "Slow Fade" acoustic demos (on the *Lost Masters Essential Collection*) are far from "not particuarly interesting" because they amply display what I have suspected for years—namely that Bruce is (or was) an Elvis Costello fan! Both songs recall what Costello was doing on his second and third albums, my favorite period of EC, to boot.

Johnny Saulovich
Oakland, CA

PALE HORSE COMIN'

Dear Editor:

Is it just me, or does anyone else feel the total lack of respect that Bruce Springsteen has shown towards his audience over the past few years? Having been a fan since 1974, it is very difficult for me to make such an indictment against the man. His music has been and continues to be a very important part of my life. But the connection and repect that I've felt over the years has started to wane.

With the release of *The Ghost of Tom Joad*—a truly glorious and spiritual album—and the announcement of a solo tour, I, like everyone else, looked forward to seeing some of the best shows since 1978. After attending a few of these shows and listening to many more on tape, I've come to a few conclusions as to what is the proper decorum at a '90s Springsteen show.

Firstly, we must not distract our Professor with any hand-clapping or singing along, for fear that this will deter our host from "giving us his best." Secondly, we must not call out any favorite requests, or we may risk getting a sarcastic, profanity-laced response in return. And thirdly, we must remain very, very quiet during the monologues between songs, lest our host be forced to actually improvise and change his story from the one he told the night before.

And just what is our reward for such attentiveness? We are treated to the performance of such gems as "Sell It," "Little Things," and "Pilgrim in the Temple of Love"—three songs that rank right up there with Chuck Berry's "My Ding-a-Ling" in terms of artistc value.

Of course, I'm being overly harsh; at these very same shows we're treated to stirring renditions of "Across the Border" and "Brothers Under the Bridges," which makes the whole situation so frustrating for long-time fans. We know what the man is capable of producing. To see him setle for less in some misguided attempt at down-sizing his image as a rock 'n' roll icon is truly sad.

As sad as it is for me to say, I've seen the future of rock 'n' roll, and it has grown into a nasty, bitter old man. Better off if it were to just fade away.

Joe Gillooly
Staten Island, NY

IN A SINGLE SOUND

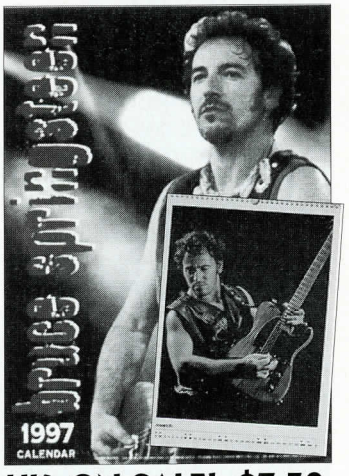
Dear Editor:

This was the first time I had been to a Bruce Springsteen show, and before he came to Tokyo I had no knowledge of him or his songs except his name. He said "Hello" and introductions like "This song is about love and sex" in Japanese, but mostly he was telling the stories between the songs in English. And he sang the songs in English, of course. Besides his fans, I guess most Japanese don't understand the meaning of his songs. His English is hard to understand, so I stopped trying to catch the meaning, but I was floating on the waves of the sounds. I concentrated on the tone of his voice, how the voice and harmonica and guitar were combined.

Other stories occurred from the sounds. It was really beautiful and emotional; I enjoyed it like abstract paintings. Can you imagine how surprised I was to read and understand the translations of the songs after the show on the train? The meaning is

Continued page 34

1997 BRUCE CALENDARS



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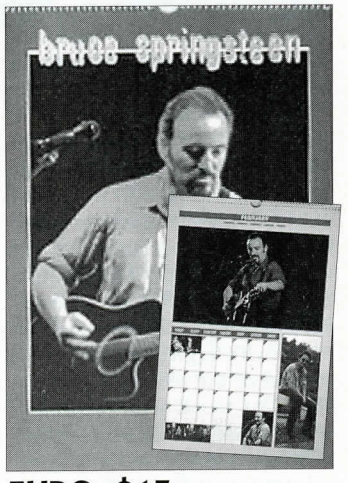

EURO: $15

Once again we've got *both* the UK and the European Springsteen calendars for the new year. A sample page from each is shown above: the UK calendar has bigger, full page photos with that month's dates at the bottom; the Euro calendar has smaller pics, but more room to write for each day of the month. The UK calendar is now **half-price**, and there's a special new deal when you buy the pair:

GET BOTH FOR $20!

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She'll let you deep inside

A Million Miles Away

By Charles R. Cross

Not long ago I installed a CD player in my station wagon and in doing so made the transition from spending most of my car time listening to live tapes, to being able to instantly access clear digital sound. Ever since my first car (an old Ford that I bought back in the seventies), music has always sounded better to me while driving. Early rock 'n' roll was made to be heard on an AM radio, or a jukebox, and the best producers always knew how to make a song sound big over those tiny, tinny speakers. Which might be why when Bruce Springsteen first recorded "Born to Run"—one of the greatest driving songs ever—he insisted it be mixed with AM radio in mind.

Yet when I made the transition to digital sound in my car system and popped in Bruce Springsteen's *Greatest Hits* CD (not one I play very often at home), I found myself skipping over the car songs of my youth, "Born to Run" and "Thunder Road," perhaps because I heard them enough on my Ford's eight-track player. Instead of the old war horses on the CD, I found myself repeatedly going back to "Secret Garden."

When the CD initially came out, "Secret Garden" was my least favorite of the four new tunes. The third line caught me like a barbed fishin' lure—it's allusion to oral sex seemed out of place within Springsteen's catalog, where sexual love had been rarely spoken of and certainly had never been described with such detail. I'm no prude, yet I thought the line was too obvious, too plain, not a metaphor for anything. As such it seemed vulgar, perhaps because it wasn't the kind of song that I could now walk about my neighborhood singing to myself (always a sign that I'm falling in love with a tune). Would I really be able to round a corner and let a passerby hear me say, "she'll let you in her mouth?"

Yet as I listened to the song more, and as I began to listen to tapes of some of the shows on *The Ghost of Tom Joad* tour, the bawdiness of "Secret Garden" seemed downright tame compared to the ribald humor of "Pilgrim" and "Red-Headed Woman." Over time, I've managed to live through the "Secret Garden" fellatio reference, and I've grown to love the song nonetheless (I can't say the same for "Pilgrim" or "Red-Headed Woman, which I still find in poor taste).

If *Tom Joad* is about people who have been marginalized by society for economic reasons, "Secret Garden" is about people who have been marginalized from love itself.

"Secret Garden" is more about a quest for intimacy than it is an expression of sexuality. As a friend says, it's about the unknowability of another person—how no matter how much you think you know someone, you really can't. It's a simple love song but with a twist: Though the woman in the song will let her lover into her physical world (her car, her body, and even her heart), the spiritual secret garden remains elusive, as does the deeper intimacy the lover seeks. Thematically this song has much in common with "Brilliant Disguise," another tune about the mystery of knowing another person completely. As anyone who has ever experienced the depths of long-term union knows, building a relationship is like peeling the layers of an onion—the more you peel away, the more you find still hidden. And the process of developing deeper intimacy is impossible if the object of your affection decides to remain distant and cold.

"Secret Garden" both suggests falling in love and the emptiness one feels after breaking up. This is not a love song for the fresh-scrubbed 18-year-old college student and it's not about youthful heartbreak. There is a weariness both in the narrative and in the actual tone of Springsteen's voice that only comes to those who have felt loss. This is a love song for divorcees, for those who have been cheated on, for those who have committed adultery themselves and are filled with regret, and for those who have held love in their hands and lost it. If *The Ghost of Tom Joad* is about people who have been marginalized by society for economic reasons, "Secret Garden"—like *Tunnel of Love* before it—is about people who have been marginalized from love itself.

All of which explains why the song works so well in the context of *Jerry Maguire*, a movie that explores how one reconnects with that part of oneself that can still love. Coincidentally, my new interest in "Secret Garden" comes at the same time as the song has reemerged on radio stations after being off playlists for over two years. In early April, "Secret Garden" was climbing up the *Billboard* charts (Bruce's 18th Top 40 hit), success due only to radio airplay since the single is not available in most stores (Columbia plans to change that as the single was scheduled to be re-released in April). Based on the success of *Jerry Maguire* the song has become "the sappy make-out song of the moment," as touted by *Entertainment Weekly*.

A lot of the new interest in "Secret Garden" came about when radio stations began airing a doctored version of the song that featured some dialogue from the movie overdubbed over the instrumental passages. Many stations began airing the *Jerry Maguire* edit of the tune in February and March but by April some had switched to the original version of the song, as interest grew.

But it wasn't the *Jerry Maguire* edit that got me spinning "Secret Garden" again, though I did see the movie and liked both it and the use of the song in it. I haven't even heard the *Jerry Maguire* edit of "Secret Garden" yet as I don't listen to radio (particularly since I got the car CD player) and I haven't yet bothered to get a tape of it.

It's more that other events in my life have pointed me in the direction of "Secret Garden." It's been a time to ask questions about intimacy, about the unknowability of women, about what kind of man—at age 40 this month—I've become. In short, it's been a season of many late night drives, and more than a few times "Secret Garden" has been part of the soundtrack to those journeys.

* * *

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ON LIPS

ON THE RADIO: Show me the Hot 100! Two years after "Secret Garden" peaked on the *Billboard* charts at #63, the song is back, re-entering at #50 and climbing steadily from there. The recurrence is due, of course, to *Jerry Maguire*, and in no small part to the "*Jerry Maguire* edit" of the song. This version, which intercuts dialogue from the movie into the instrumental sections of the song, isn't commercially available, but has spread to radio stations across the U.S. and gotten quite a lot of airplay. So much, in fact, that it inspired an oddball take-off: If the *Jerry Maguire* mix is too sappy for you, you'll want to listen for the *Fargo* mix, put together by someone with a sense of humor, you betcha. Howard Stern has also spun a *Private Parts* edit of the song. Even as the parodies pile up, *Billboard* reports that "Secret Garden" has only gotten more popular as stations have started playing the original album version, without any movie dialogue at all. Imagine that.

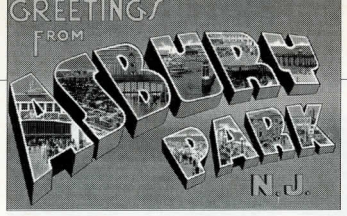
E STREET SHUFFLE: It's been almost four years since Patti Scialfa released her fantastic first record, *Rumble Doll*, and word has it that she's now hard at work on the follow-up. Scialfa has been joined in the studio by Bobby Bandiera, a busy man these days who has also been contributing to Jon Bon Jovi's latest solo project. . . . Nils Lofgren has been on the road with a flurry of acoustic dates in Europe and the States, including the 20th Anniversary party for Record and Tape Traders, home of longtime *Backstreets* supporter Steve Smollen. Look for a new Nils CD, *Acoustic Live*, taken from these performances and out now. . . . Danny Federici has a new record out named after his New Jersey hometown, *Flemington*. To order the album and other goodies from Danny, check out his label's website: <http://www.deadeye.com>. . . . If you've ever dreamed of sharing the stage with the Big Man, that dream is now within reach. Clarence Clemons has been hosting a regular weekly jam at the Jazz Showcase in West Palm Beach, and if you can play an instrument, you can sit in. Yep, anyone is invited to play with Clarence and his four-piece band at these casual sessions, and his guests have included both regular joes and old friends: according to the *New York Times* news service, one of the regulars has been Hal Hollander, one of Clarence's bandmates in Joyful Noyze decades ago on the Jersey Shore. As Clemons told the *Times*, "I hate to practice. Monday nights I can practice with friends." These jams may become less of a regular thing as his schedule picks up a bit—he'll be joining Steve Cropper and Donald "Duck" Dunn as part of the backing band for the Commitments, whose activities include a UK tour and possibly a live album.

WHERE THE BANDS ARE: We may not be getting a new record from Springsteen this year—at least we're not holding our breath—but the next best thing is in the works. Capitol is currently planning two CDs of Bruce covers, appropriately titled *One Step Up* and *Two Steps Back*. The first will be a collection of new performances recorded specifically for this record; some artists already confirmed are John Hiatt, Nils Lofgren, the Smithereens ("Downbound Train"), Dave Alvin ("Seeds"), and the BoDeans ("Atlantic City"). *Two Steps Back* will compile previously released covers, but thankfully is going the more obscure route—including Sonny Burgess's "Tiger Rose" and Robbin Thompson's "Guilty"—rather than trotting out the same old stuff. Look for these two discs (produced by *Backstreets* SuperSub Cheryl Pawelski) to be released around August of this year. These are the first collections of this kind to get Springsteen's official blessing, and some proceeds will be donated to the charity of his choice. . . . Look for versions of "Fire" on two recent CD releases, one on Robert Godon and Danny Gatton's *The Humbler*, and another on *Walking Down a Street Called Love*, a new live import from Link Wray. . . . For a cover with a twist, check out Joe D'Urso & Stone Caravan's update called "Bye Johnny Bye (Dead Rock Stars)" on their latest album, *Mirrors, Shoestrings & Credit Cards*. You may remember these guys from the rave reviews they got opening for Grushecky and Springsteen during the October Assault tour; *Mirrors* is their fourth release since 1991, and well worth checking out.

JERRY FLOYD PHOTO

Larry Flynt considers branching out.

BOUND FOR GLORY: An illustrated book of Springsteen's lyrics is planned for publication in January 1998, according to *Publisher's Weekly*, to coincide with his induction into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame. Maybe that should be "potential" induction—but who are we kidding? . . . Due for release in June is a new book, *Born in the U.S.A.: Bruce Springsteen and the American Tradition* by Harvard professor Jim Cullen. The book's blurb touts it as "a thinking person's exploration of the cultural significance of the life, words, and music of Bruce Springsteen.". . . As part of *TV Guide*'s Grammy preview, the magazine listed TV stars' picks for song of the year. Bart Simpson chose Springsteen's "Dead Man Walkin'." Why? "Because it's about a dead guy walking, which sounds pretty cool to me.". . . *Pollstar* magazine recently listed their 1996 Award Winners, with Springsteen taking top honors for "Small Hall Tour of the Year." Stiff competition included Ani DiFranco, Rage Against the Machine, and Tori Amos, but the magazine easily summed up the reason why the Boss was the winner: "...every night, audience members went home knowing they had just experienced something far more significant than a rock 'n' roll concert." . . . Gavin Edwards has a new book of misheard lyrics called *He's Got the Whole World in His Pants*, the sequel to *'Scuse Me While I Kiss This Guy*. The new collection includes several more Bruce mondegreens—that's the technical term for these things—like "Is that you, baby, or just a brick in disguise?". . . . Earlier this year the *New York Times Magazine* ran a 12 page article on Springsteen by Nicholas Dawidoff. A somewhat odd title for the cover story—"Steinbeck in Leather"—but certainly the most extensive (not to mention flattering) piece from mainstream media on Bruce's latest album and tour. . . . A recent issue of *Details* lamented "the continued absence of a Springsteen b-sides album... Some of his best songs are available only as flip sides of decade-old 45s. That Prince guy compiled his, Elvis Costello too (twice!)—why not Bruce?" Amen to that.



Solo turns from Federici and Seldin

Piano Men

By Robert Makin

Two keyboard players long associated with the Asbury Park music scene have released instrumental albums recently, and they are two of the more notable releases from the Shore this season. One of those albums comes from E Street Band member Danny Federici who with his debut album now joins Nils Lofgren, David Sancious, Steve Van Zandt, and Clarence Clemons in the club of E Streeters who have gone on to release solo albums. Though Federici was most identified with his organ playing within the E Street Band, he also strokes the keys of his piano and his favorite instrument, the accordion, on his debut CD, *Flemington*.

Listening to *Flemington*, there's no question that Federici's chops were confined within the E Street Band. The man can play jazz and funk with the best of them. Best of all, they're wrapped in a big blue bow of pop.

As you'll read in an interview in this issue, *Flemington* came about when hometown friends approached Federici about why he never mentioned his roots in the small New Jersey town to the media. Reporters would mistake him for a native of Paterson or Piscataway without even bothering to ask where he was from. The new album is an entertaining, uplifting apology for the misunderstanding. Even though the self-produced effort is studio-slick, there's no question that the music came from Federici's soul. I mean, when was the last time you heard a funky accordion?

Long-time bandmate Garry Tallent, who played with Federici in the Downtown Tangiers Band years before their ride on E Street, adds to the funk on two numbers. Tallent also gets to stretch more than he usually did with Bruce. Nils Lofgren plays on the record as well, providing guitar on two numbers.

Flemington will surprise you with it's diversity. On "Mr. Continental," the accordion turns to Latin. The instrument is surrounded in a sea of tasty percussion from south of the border. Like a world-weary gypsy, Federici makes the accordion sound as haunting as Asbury Park looks these days. The moving, ethereal "Sea Bright" echoes some of the broken hearts who walk the beaches of the Jersey Shore after a lonely night in a bar, wondering where their carefree days have gone.

"Stormin'" Norman Seldin, second from right, with the Joyful Noyze.

As a child, Federici had few-care free days. By the time he was ten, he was a local star in Flemington. He often played his accordion on television and radio, among other gigs lined up by his mother, who is now dying in a Flemington nursing home.

The opening title track and the closing tune ("Pennsylvania Avenue," named after the street on which Federici grew up), are odes of joy, however. One can feel the release that both tunes brought the rocker as he confronted his past, while reveling in his once youthful talent. One number, "My Little Cow," was written for his year-old daughter who had her christening in Wisconsin.

Federici also tickles the ivories, which he rarely got to do on E Street. While the accordion on "Sea Bright" sounds sad and lonely, the piano on "Carousel Breeze" is as much fun as a night on a bustling boardwalk. "Round & Round" features a duel between piano and organ. And hearing "A Doorman's Life," it comes as no surprise that Federici has been doing well of late in soundtrack circles. This number is a tribute to his late father, and it has the kind of irresistible, yet unobtrusive feel that Bill Conti of "Rocky" fame puts into his movie material.

The entire disc is excellent background music; the kind of stuff that is great on headphones, whether nodding off to sleep or romping through the woods. Relaxing but never boring, *Flemington* is a must-have for any E Street fan who digs consummate musicianship and spirited production. *Flemington* can be had by writing to Deadeye Records, which is Federici's own label, at P.O. Box 5022-347, Lake Forest, CA 92630 or deadeye@deadeye.com. Or order a copy via the label's web site, <www.deadeye.com>.

The other notable Shore keyboard album comes from Norman Seldin, who is still making "joyful noyze" with *Idyll Point*, a jazz and classically inspired departure from the New Orleans R&B the pianist usually performs. Best known for being Clarence Clemons's boss before Bruce, back in the band Norman Seldin and the Joyful Noyze, Seldin has been a longtime fixture on the Shore. A typical concert with Norman recalls Professor Longhair and Dr. John, the king and prince of piano-driven New Orleans R&B, yet on this album Seldin has put aside the big show for lovely soundscapes as breathtaking as a field of Irish green. After listening to *Idyll Point*, there's no doubt in my mind that Stormin' Norman is a spiritual man whose inner peace is as strong as it is sensitive.

While Federici uses rock as a foundation on his instrumental effort, Seldin relies on 47 years of classical and jazz training. "Oklahoma City 1995" ought to be commissioned by *Dateline* the next time television wants to translate tragedy into ratings. I cried when I heard this song, yet wanted to listen to it again and again, because its aural message of serenity in the face of senseless loss is so damn powerful.

"Dreams of a Misty Romance" and "Inside Emotions" also are beautiful. Seldin has fun on the latter half of the disc with the traditional-sounding originals "Turbo's Ragtime" and "Old Mill Rag," dedicated to the joint that most often books him. "Favorite Songs Medley" features expressive snippets of "Unchained Melody," "I'll Be Seeing You," "Wish Upon a Star" and Don McLean's "Vincent." Like Federici, Seldin includes a track written for his daughter and wife, "Melody's Symphony 4 Hands for Jamey."

I believe that most music comes from a force of creation and source of inspiration. Seldin certainly was picking ripe fruit off the song tree when he wrote and recorded this album. I hope you'll take the time to throw him some beads. Call (908) 741-1618 for more info about *Idyll Point*.

ODISC

New tour edition CDs

The Return of "Secret Garden"

With Springsteen touring the Pacific Rim for the first time in years, both Japan and Australia have come up with special packages to commemorate the occasion. Both sets consist of the same two discs—the full *Tom Joad* album along with the "Missing" four-track CD5—but the discs are contained in completely unique packages in each country. Down Under, the discs are housed in a four-fold cardboard digipack with the *Tom Joad* album art on the cover, adding extra type that reads "Australian Tour Edition." Two nice duotone photos adorn the interior, along with a complete list of the Australian tour dates and a pocket that holds the standard *Tom Joad* CD booklet.

The Japanese edition also bears the *Tom Joad* album art on the front, and includes an integrated obi. The package is a three-fold cardboard digipack, with the "Missing" CD5 cover art on the inside. The enclosed booklet was printed especially for this edition, as it lists the tracks from both CDs, with lyrics for all in both Japanese and English. To top it off, the Japanese edition includes a 4-1/2 x 4-1/2 sticker of the "Missing" cover.

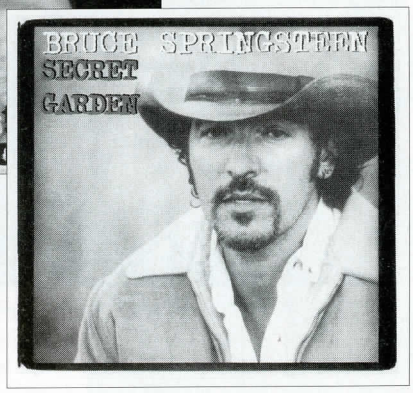
Another 2CD combo comes from Germany, where the "Missing" single has been issued with *Greatest Hits* in a slim jewelcase.

With the resurrection of "Secret Garden" comes a slew of new CD5s. Unfortunately, the tour editions described above—with unique packaging and configurations from different countries, but no new material—are also quite indicative of the latest singles. They're great for collectors, but there's been a frustrating lack of any new b-sides since the "Missing" CD.

A new "Secret Garden" single from Australia has a unique lineup of released material, adding the studio version of "The Ghost of Tom Joad" as well as live versions of "Straight Time" and "Sinaloa Cowboys" (previously issued on the UK and European

Left: the Japanese tour edition digipack, combining the Joad *CD with the "Missing" CD5.*

Below: the "Secret Garden" CD single from Australia.



"The Ghost of Tom Joad" CD5). This Aussie single has a picture sleeve found nowhere else: it's basically the same as the "Missing" cover, with photo from the *Joad*-sessions, but with "Secret Garden" type instead.

Two *more* "Secret Garden" singles are slated for release in the UK, making a total of four different UK single configurations for that song to date. The new discs combine versions of the title track with *Joad* studio material as well as songs from the *Blood Brothers* bonus CD. One contains the album version of "Secret Garden," "Missing," "High Hopes" and "The Ghost of Tom Joad"; the other has "Secret Garden" with strings, plus the alternate version of "Blood Brothers," "Streets of Philadelphia," and "Highway 29." New singles for "Secret Garden" have also cropped up in Holland, where a two-track CD in a cardboard sleeve adds "Missing," and a four-track CD has the same songs as the first new UK single above. The Holland sleeves use shots of Springsteen from the "Secret Garden" video; the UK singles were not available at press time, but will reportedly have new picture sleeves as well.

For another alternate configuration of the *Blood Brothers* material, look to Japan. The Japanese *Blood Brothers* package contains the same songs as in the US, but the video comes with a set of two 3-inch CDs rather than a CD5. Disc one conatins "Blood Brothers," "Secret Garden" (strings) and "High Hopes," with the other two tracks, "Murder Incorporated" (live) and "Without You" on disc two. Many Japanese singles are pressed on CD3s anyway, but the main reason for the alternate format in this case is apparently a Japanese regulation dictating that any bonus CDs have to fit within the video package. The set includes printed lyrics in both English and Japanese.

We've been hearing about possible Bridge School Benefit releases for years, but the latest word is that there may be two such collections in the works. Neil Young, the man behind the annual benefit concerts, will be releasing his own compilation, and Sony appears to be planning a separate set as well. As for the differences between the two, a source at Sony was quoted as saying, "ours will have Pearl Jam on it." With over a decade of performances to pull from, it's conceivable that the two sets will be quite different, and for Bruce fans that simply doubles the potential for Springsteen material. Springsteen played the Bridge Benefit twice, in 1986 and 1995.

—Christopher Phillips

the backstreets jukebox

1. Southside Johnny
Spittin' Fire
Musidisc (French 2CD)

2. Dan Bern
Dan Bern
WORK/Sony (CD)

3. Red House Painters
Songs for a Blue Guitar
Island (CD)

4. Sleater-Kinney
Dig Me Out
Kill Rock Stars (CD)

5. Lucinda Williams
First Album Demos
bootleg (CD)

6. Built to Spill
Perfect From Now On
Warner Bros. (CD)

7. Jamiroquai
Travelling Without Moving
WORK/Sony (CD)

8. Bruce Springsteen
The River
Columbia (CD)

9. Squirrel Bait
Skag Heaven
Drag City (CD reissue)

10. The Jayhawks
The Sound of Lies
American (CD)

10 Monster Discs to Play Today and Everyday

Grammy win, club jam pass the time

Solo Acoustic Tour to Continue

As Bruce Springsteen wrapped up the Australian leg of his solo acoustic tour in February, a revealing interview had him looking ahead to what would be in store after the final show Down Under. In *Time-Off* magazine Springsteen discussed plans for his next record, and checked any speculation that his next record would be to *Tom Joad* what *BUSA* was to *Nebraska*.

"That's not gonna happen this time. I don't know if that will exactly happen again for me.... I'd just love to try and continue on in this vein—for another record at least, if I come up with the songs. I've got that nice song 'Brothers Under the Bridge' and 'Long Time Coming.' I've got some things sitting around. I'll see what happens when I get home."

As for what some have been calling "the tour that wouldn't end," Springsteen confirmed that there would be more dates to come, and explained how he thought the next few months would go. As he told *Time-Off*'s Sean Sennett, "I go home. Then I've got a couple of months where I'm gonna try and record some of the material I have. Then I go to Europe for about three weeks... then I take the summer off and hang out with the kids."

KEN LESNIK PHOTOS

Above left: Bruce and Gary at the R&B Foundation Awards. Right: Steve, his wife and Patti Scialfa join in.

Back to Europe

One of the first indications that Springsteen would be returning to Europe came in January, when Springsteen was selected to receive the 1997 Polar Music Prize. The award (including a cash prize of one million Swedish kronor, or roughly $151,000) is presented by the King of Sweden every year in Stockholm, and it was announced that Springsteen would be showing up to receive the award on May 5, and to perform two songs for the televised ceremony.

The Polar Music Prize, established to be the musical equivalent of the Nobel Prize, has been given to two performers each year for the past six years. Recipients are chosen "for their significant achievement in music, or in musical activity, or for an achievement esteemed of great potential importance within the musical realm." The Prize committee's citation states that Springsteen is given the award for "an outstanding career as singer and stage performer. His authority in rock music is unshakeable.... he is an uncompromising steward of the essential qualities of rock.... with his social pathos, [he] is also a singer of the people, a modern 'bard.'" Also receiving the award this year is Swedish choral conductor Eric Ericson; past winners include Joni Mitchell, Elton John, Quincy Jones and Paul McCartney.

The European concert dates announced later were clearly planned to coincide with the Polar Music Prize ceremony, beginning the following night and continuing for most of May. With these shows, Springsteen will have played over 125 solo acoustic concerts, including his first stops in Austria, Poland and the Czech Republic.

These European dates are the only shows currently announced, but Springsteen may wrap things up with a few final performances in the States, most likely another "homecoming" back in New Jersey. As we go to press, a five-night stand in June at the Paramount in Asbury Park is being discussed.

While Bruce had said he'd be recording before heading to Europe, a brief mention in the *Minneapolis Star* suggested that he was still undecided as to what direction to take: "Springsteen will return to Europe and do a brief East Coast solo tour before evaluating whether his new tunes work best solo or with a band." Whether or not his studio plans came together, Springsteen did take advantage of some of this "down-time" to perform at the Grammys and play his first surprise club gig on the Jersey Shore since before the tour began in 1995.

1997 Grammy Awards

Springsteen made a good showing at this year's Grammys, taking home a statue for Best Contemporary Folk Album and playing "The Ghost of Tom Joad" solo acoustic. His performance was a magical moment even at rehearsal, when Bruce ran through the song several times, wowing a small hushed crowd. During the ceremony itself, Springsteen's powerful (if abbreviated) rendition of "Ghost" was introduced by Pete Seeger. Accepting his award shortly afterward—the first time the Contemporary Folk category has been part of the televised ceremony—Springsteen thanked his fans as well as his family, and joked about the fact that those who perform during the awards are usually the ones to win:

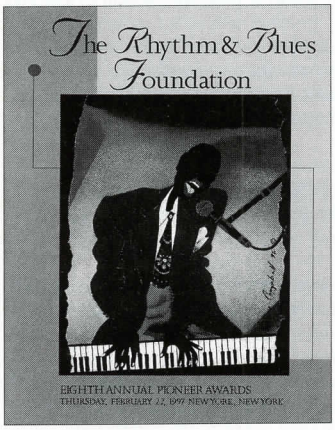
"First I'd like to say I'm hon-

EUROPE 1997 ACOUSTIC DATES

May 5	Stockholm, Sweden	Polar Music Prize
May 6-7	Vienna, Austria	Austria Center
May 9-10	Warsaw, Poland	Sala Kongesowa
May 12	Prague, Czech Republic	Congress Center
May 15	Lyon, France	Auditorium
May 16	Montpellier, France	Le Corum
May 18	Nice, France	Acropolis
May 19	Toulon, France	Zenith
May 21	Florence, Italy	Teatro Verdi
May 22	Naples, Italy	Teatro Augusteo
May 25-26	Paris, France	Palias de Congress

ored to be amongst these other nominees, they're such good records and people whose work I've admired for a long time. I guess Eric Clapton is right: you sing the song, you get the award. But anyway, I'd like to thank my family for the support; thanks Patti, Jon Landau, Barbara Carr, Charlie Plotkin, Toby Scott. I'd like to thank Elaine Steinbeck for allowing me to use the Tom Joad image. Everybody at Sony Records around the world. Donnie Inner, who as he sat in my studio listening to a rough cut, his dreams of mega-sales slipping down the drain, gave me his full support from the heart. I appreciate that, Donnie. Last of all, I'd like to thank my fans for supporting the tour and work I've done the past year. And especially Pete Seeger for being here tonight. That was a thrill for me, Pete, thank you. Thank you very much."

Springsteen was nominated in two other categories as well, Best Rock Vocal Performance and Best Music Video, Long Form. Other Boss winners included Tommy Sims, who shared the Grammy for Song of the Year for co-writing Eric Claptons "Change the World"; Roy Bittan also took the stage as part of the multitude of producers responsible for Celine Dion's Album of the Year, *Falling Into You*.



The following night, as an official part of Grammy Week, Gary U.S. Bonds was honored with a Pioneer Award at the Ninth Annual Rhythm & Blues Foundation Awards. The ceremony was held at the New York Hilton, where Springsteen and Little Steven Van Zandt, co-producers of Bonds's comeback, were on hand to do the honors. The two didn't perform, letting

REGINA RAHEY PHOTO

SAL DIMARIA PHOTO

Springsteen, Jakob Dylan, and Jon Bon Jovi bring it on home.

Bonds have the spotlight on "Quarter to Three," but they did have some fine words to say, and Little Steven nearly stole the show with his introduction:

"I picked up the guitar in 1965 and put it down in 1972 because, I figured, most of everything great that could be done, was done by then. Looking back now, I wasn't half wrong. In the late '60s I joined a band that played what was called the 'oldies circuit'. The Dovells was the band. And we would play these clubs and the same group of performers would play these clubs: Ben E. King, Gary U.S. Bonds. One night in one of these clubs, Gary was telling jokes and cracking everybody up. One of the funniest guys I ever met. A few years later, after *The River* tour, Bruce comes up to me and says, 'Let's work with Gary.' I said, 'Bruce—Gary U.S. Bonds? The guy can't sing! Sure, he's funny and all that, but there are guys out there like Ben E. King who don't have deals and are more deserving. Gary U.S. Bonds?' 'Yeah, Steve, we should work with Gary.' 'Why?' 'Well, because I stole his entire act from him!' Well, two records and one top 10 hit later, Bruce was right. That's why we call him the Boss!"

The "New Dylans"

A few weeks later, the Boss joined the Wallflowers at the Tradewinds club in Sea Bright, jamming on five songs with the band and showing that he still knows his way around an electric guitar. Springsteen played for the entire encore, wielding a black telecaster, singing backup, and trading off on some lead vocals. The encore began with a Wallflowers song, "God Don't Make Lonely Girls," and Jakob Dylan looked positively ecstatic to have one of his own compositions played by the Boss. They followed that first song with four classics, Dylan saying, "We got him here, we're gonna keep him playing!"

Bruce and Jakob traded verses on "My Girl." The next song, "Brand New Cadillac," featured a great guitar lead from Bruce, trading off with the Wallflowers' guitarist, Michael Ward. Jon Bon Jovi joined in on "Bring It On Home to Me," sharing lead vocals with Dylan, and stayed onstage through the final song, "Not Fade Away." Springsteen, Dylan and Bon Jovi exchanged verses equally on the last number, though Bruce had Jakob feeding him the upcoming lyrics before each line. The closer also featured more mean guitar leads from Bruce, in a call-and-response with Ward.

Bruce's appearance wasn't a complete surprise; he drove the band to the club that afternoon and played at soundcheck, which also included "People Get Ready" and "Tears of a Clown."

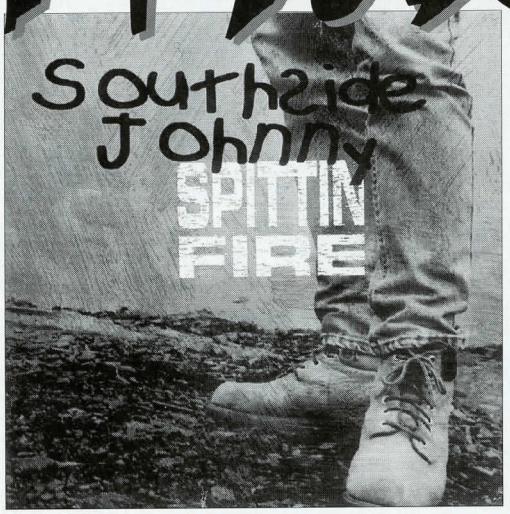
—Christopher Phillips
with additional reports from
Ken Lesnik and Michael Given

UNPLUGGED AND PLUGGED

•2/26/97
The Ghost of Tom Joad
Madison Square Garden
New York, NY

•3/8/97
God Don't Make Lonely Girls
My Girl
Brand New Cadillac
Bring it on Home to Me
Not Fade Away
Tradewinds
Seabright, NJ

A Moveable Feast



The Southside Johnny Interview

Southside Johnny's new release, *Spittin' Fire,* captures live acoustic performances from his fall 1995 European tour. The centerpiece of that tour was an extensive series in Paris at the Chesterfield Cafe where Southside—along with Bobby Bandiera, Rusty Cloud and David Hayes—ran through an astounding number of covers and originals, both old and new, over ten nights. All the material on *Spittin' Fire* is taken from that ten-night stand in Paris. It's a city where Johnny has spent quite a bit of time, and that's where **Jean-Marc Bouineau** and Badlands correspondent **Roger Goulet** caught up with him for the UK fanzine *The Ties That Bind.* Southside talks about his career, the creative process, and happy endings.

Whose idea was it to play the Chesterfield Cafe?

It happened just like that. Bobby [Bandiera] and I were attending the Paris Record Fair in April '95 to see Little Bob Story at a signing session and we met Steven Jump from Badlands there. He had heard that we were doing some acoustic shows in the U.S. and asked us to come and do some in England. I wanted us to play as a quartet, but the first time around it was just me and Bobby in London and Sheffield. At the Mean Fiddler we were asked to come back with a pianist and then the Chesterfield Cafe heard about us and offered us ten dates.

Is that the first time you've played such a long residency at one particular club?

Yes, certainly since my first album at the Stone Pony in '76.

What's different between playing with the Jukes and this semi-acoustic format?

It's easier because I have more freedom. I can start any song and whether they know it or not doesn't matter! Although I do this with the Jukes, it's more difficult for them to improvise. Anyway, Rusty, Bobby and David know thousands of songs. It sounds better as I don't have to fight against the brass section. It's softer and more intense.

Away from music, who are your favorite artists, writers, film makers...?

I like John Huston, James Joyce and painters like Caraggio, Vermeer, Roger Campion. I don't appreciate too much abstract expressionism, but I adore the great Chester Jones. He's exhibiting at present in New York and I want to go see it. Film-wise, I've always liked hard-boiled cinema—Film Noir. It's a shame it's become so fashionable. When I was a kid we watched those films from the '40s and '50s on the family TV set in black and white in the middle of the night. My brother and I watched stuff like *Kiss Me Deadly* and other stupid things—we loved 'em. I didn't like the big Hollywood films. They looked artificial and didn't concern us, but stuff about giant spiders that ate everyone in town—that was great! I also saw some French movies at a cinema in Asbury Park, but I forget the names of the directors.

Jean-Pierre Melville?

Yeah, Melville... he came up with stories that gave you the creeps. A woman killed her husband and you sat on the edge of your seat to see how she was going to be found out. Sometimes she got away with it and that was brilliant because at that time you weren't allowed to get away with it in Hollywood; the murderer had to pay. I saw a film a few years ago in a small cinema—pure emotion which wore you out, really intense. Later I heard they'd remade the film in Hollywood with a happy ending. Completely stupid.

Don't you like happy endings, generally speaking?

You can't put it as simply as that. Have you seen *Independence Day*? I was on the extraterrestrials' side, and I was upset when they finally lost. If they had destroyed the human race it wouldn't have been too bad...

Your music isn't that dark.

No, but what's really funny is that some upbeat-sounding songs aren't really like that at all. "I Don't Wanna Go Home" is not a happy song.

How do you stay motivated after all these years?

It's hard after 30 years. I need new stimuli, something to make me want to carry on, because I don't think that I have everything yet with the Jukes. We always have projects in common on the go but it gets more difficult, besides the fact that we haven't worked together since last March. It is difficult to maintain enthusiasm when you're singing the same songs over and over again.

Have you written any new stuff?

Yeah, loads. "Blue Radio," which is on the album, is one of them, but the rest aren't quite ready.

You always create something new at every show. It must be exciting in one way but risky in another.

What's good about being on tour is that it's new every night, unless you're in one of those boring rock shows where everything's planned in advance. With the Jukes one would never know what would happen—not even me. It's less evident now, and perhaps it's time to move on.

Could you live without concerts?

I don't know. It's been thirty years. I think so, but I'm not sure. I can't afford not to. I don't know, I can't really answer this question.

You've performed thousands of concerts.

We did two or three hundred shows a year when we got started. We played all the time and it was great even though it's hard to be on the road and to have to get up every night to do something special. You've got to love this job—otherwise, it's a nightmare. That's why I prefer to do nothing for a while to see if, when I come back, the spark's still there when I sing. That said, I really loved the acoustic tour. Perhaps we'll do some more.

The Jukes have played many many times in Paris. What do you do when you are here?

I meet people, visit museums, I eat until I'm sick, I drink a lot of wine. It's easy to work in Paris compared to other places. I took three hours to walk to the Marais and look at those fantastically dressed women. It's a great city.

Do you know Gustav Moreau's house?

Yeah, sure. I love the place. I've been there twice. It's great. The guy's completely mad. It's very similar to Terry Gilliam's universe. Some paintings are so big you can't take them out of the house. You'd have to destroy the place to get them out. His family looked after him so that he didn't

LAWRENCE KIRSCH PHOTO

Back in the seventies, Johnny and the Jukes play the silver ball. In 1997 he says, "On stage or off stage... I'm the same guy who plays pinball."

have to worry about money. Money is always a problem when you want to create things. It's a big preoccupation.

Only in certain areas. If you're making movies it's always a problem, but it's not necessary if you're writing songs on an acoustic guitar. You can do that anytime you like. For painting it's about the same if you've got the money to buy paints and canvas. A lot of people couldn't do it though, like Van Gogh, who was always asking his brother for money for paints.

Is it hard to earn cash like that?

Ahh, because you want to eat as well? No, you can't do both. You paint or you eat. When I started singing in groups we didn't earn money; we got paid on the side for lodging, food, etc. That teaches you the value of what you do. You don't do it for glory or money.

Have you always done exactly what you wanted?

Not exactly, but mainly I do what I want irrespective of whether it's good or bad for my career.

Is it a matter of principle?

No, it's because I'm spoiled. I've always been spoiled and I've always acted like that. There are a lot of things in my life which would have brought me lots of money or a certain kind of popularity, but they weren't what I wanted. I don't think about it in terms of better or worse. What's certain is that I would never be wealthy like Bruce, for instance, but that doesn't really count. Everything that happens seems right, even the hard times. If you behave in a certain way you've got to expect the bad aspects of life that this attitude implies.

What would you really like to do in the future?

I don't know, that's why I don't do anything. It's funny with this new album coming out. All I did was play on it, somebody else did all the rest. That's good, because I wouldn't have had the initiative. If it had been left up to me it probably wouldn't have come out—which might have been a good thing!

Do you want to change your job?

I don't want any job, I don't want to do anything just for the sake of it. I took a small break and crossed the States for a month's driving. I want to do it again when I go home. It's great, because it means you don't have to answer to anybody. I'm against all that sort of planning where you have to be some place at a certain time. I don't want to be there anymore. It's simply a reaction to what I've done until now.

That's freedom.

No, I think I've simply arrived at the end of the road. I'm worn out. It is freedom, I suppose. I'm perfectly happy to read eight hours a day and then the next day take the car and just drive. It's about all I want to do, except for collecting records. I put an advert in my local paper and that's become my principle occupation. I don't have any goal in my life and it's absolutely superb. I spent so many years preoccupied with making music that today I feel that the time has come to relax a bit.

Is it easy for you to write?

Generally I take it as it comes. Nothing planned. I sit down and say to myself, "It's time to write," and then wait for the inspiration to come. Sometimes it works, but what I write doesn't really reflect my personality. I'm not disciplined like, say, Hemingway was, getting up at five in the morning. I have to learn to be patient.

What state are you in after a concert? Do you think about what happened?

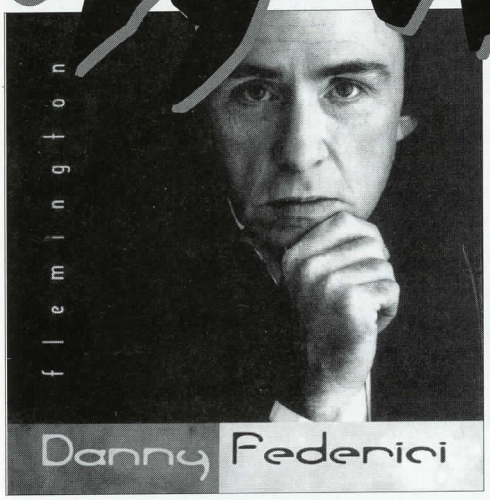
Sometimes I may listen to the recording, and every time it's different. Some people love the shows that I think are passable, and vice-versa. That's why I think it's stupid to try to analyze these sorts of things, especially when you're the last person capable of doing it.

When you're onstage do you adopt a different persona?

No, I'm not one of those kinds of people. What you see is what you get. I don't play a role onstage. I'm the same on stage or offstage. Stage is more intense, but I'm the same guy who plays pinball.

My Hometown

The Danny Federici Interview



Before Danny Federici became the keyboardist for the E Street Band, he had a rich personal history in his hometown of Flemington. After years on the road with Bruce Springsteen, however, Federici forgot about the good times with friends and music in the West Jersey berg, nestled between New York City and Philadelphia. Right before his baby daughter, Madison Lynn, was born last year, Federici's father passed away. When the musician returned to Flemington to take care of family business, old friends expressed concern about his having lost his "roots." Federici has dug back in with *Flemington,* an instrumental disc that serves as an aural snapshot of his life in New Jersey. Soon after jamming in Asbury during Bruce's acoustic shows at the Paramount Theater, Federici returned to the Garden State to promote his new disc in his hometown. The record has been released on the keyboardist's own label, Deadeye Records, which is based in his current home of California. Wherever he may get his mail, Federici undoubtedly is a down-to-earth Jersey guy, as this interview by **Robert Makin** will prove.

***Flemington* is chock full of funky, jazzy, poppy instrumentals. Why did you prefer that style to rock for this disc?**

That was Bruce's music. This is my music. I've been writing and performing for a long time. I had quite a career going in rock 'n' roll. I've been classically trained on the accordion since I was 7. I had written instrumental songs for many years. I got so involved with the family of the E Street Band, there wasn't a vehicle for my music. You get comfortable in a job like that. Then I said, "Hey, I have something here to say."

I've always been into, like, David Sanborn, Anita Baker, Al Jarreau. That's the kind of stuff I listen to in the car. I don't listen to a lot of music. I don't have a stereo in the house. I have my own studio, so I hear a lot of music all day. You don't want to listen to it when you get home. It's just like a carpenter doesn't want to fix cabinets in the kitchen for his wife.

In what ways does the disc reflect the work you've done with the E Street Band?

I purposely made "Flemington" the title track, because it's reminiscent of the sound that everyone is familiar with. Both the organ and the glockenspiel that I played on "Born to Run" are on there. I think I needed to have people say, "Oh, I remember that sound. That's who that guy is?"

But the glockenspiel is the same old, hard box that I played on "Born to Run." It's quite an antique. Being out of tune is part of its character.

What inspired you to call the album *Flemington?*

Spending time over the last couple of years in my hometown. My parents were not doing so well. My father passed away a year and a half ago. I went back and forth quite a bit. I stayed with a friend of mine who I went to school with and we had a band together called the Legends. His name is Charlie Smith. We did a lot of charity gigs just as youngsters for Welfare Island, which is a home for retarded people in the area. We were very organized and we spent a lot of time together.

He had a chance to get to know me again after all the rock 'n' roll, 30,000-feet existence. We had the chance to become friends again.

Basically, Charlie was saying that all the guys I had gone to school with were upset with me. Some articles that they had read said I was from different towns. That really moved me. They thought I was ashamed of the place where I grew up. I thought that was terrible and it sort of stuck with me for a long time.

I didn't know what the whole concept of the record was going to be, but it all came together at the right time. I was writing music that I wanted to put out. I was going through these feelings of remembering my parents and growing up. I remembered, while sitting in their backyard, how I used to play and how we were close with the neighbors. That's hard to find today.

Those kinds of friends you make in your early years, you never do it again like that. It's like your first girlfriend. It's never the same. They all have a special place, a part of my heart that nobody can get to. It made me realize that life is too short to be too busy.

What about the title track, any specific memories associated with that?

Last summer, I was cleaning out my father's house. I was going through all the photos he had of my life in Flemington and in that house. I was sitting outside working hard, doing all the things he would not want me to do, messing with his stuff. It was a very special feeling. I had forgotten how much I had been involved in that town, how much I had a life there until I opened these old scrapbooks and boxes of photographs. Sure, I'm known for the E Street Band, but I had a quite a music career going as a kid. I did a lot before all that stuff and I have the photos to prove it. So I put a collage together that we use on the record.

Are there any other songs on the disc that were inspired by your hometown, such as "Pennsylvania Avenue"?

That was the street I lived on as a kid. "A Doorman's Life" was inspired by my father who was a doorman in New York City when I was a kid. They all involve these emotions I was feeling as I was reminiscing. I don't have any brothers and sisters, so I didn't have anybody telling me I should do this or that. I got to sit there for days in the heat of summer in my father's barn just looking through all this stuff. My father kept everything.

My father and I became friends later in life. During the *Born in the USA* tour, I took him to Italy, to Milan and Rome, and to Paris. He had never been in an airplane in his life. It was probably the best money I ever spent, and I've spent a lot of money, but that was probably the best I ever spent.

In Rome, my father's Italian came back to him. He wanted to stay there. I remember at the Vatican, he climbed 100 steps. He normally couldn't walk that well because he had a bad leg, but he wanted to fill this bottle with holy water. He was 70 at the time. He went into the hotel kitchen the next day, got another big jug, went back to the Vatican and climbed the 100 steps again. He said, "I got a lot of friends back home." He was having a wonderful time. He got to have an audience with the Pope. He was crying. I did some good stuff for my old man. It's hard to know what to do for your father.

While making *Flemington,* what fond memories did you recall?

I found this boat we used to have. We had this house down the shore. It was like this big thing for my father to take this boat out. He would put up such a fuss about this damn boat. It could have been a fun time, but it was a real drag. But when I look back, I know what he had been through,

because I had a boat. And it's really a pain.

There were so many things like that. It's hard to explain. I just went back and I realized that he was there for me, trying to help me. It just didn't seem like it at the time.

I just look at my daughter and I love her so much, I must kiss her 50 times a day. I say, "Man, I wish my father could see this."

Your mother was basically a "stage mother"–how often did you think of her?

My mother is really going downhill fast. Some of the slower songs are probably feelings of that. She was amazing though. I remember she got all these other little kids interested enough in what I was doing to take accordion lessons. It was weird. She started music in people's lives really because they saw me doing it.

So going through the photos, I saw how we used to dress up in costumes and go entertain folks like in hospitals and nursing homes. She'd make these people smile in these institutions. It was all her doing. We didn't know what we were doing or why.

You and your wife have a baby daughter named Madison Lynn. To what extent is getting in touch with your roots for her sake?

Her godfather, a good friend of mine named Rich Lester, still lives in Flemington. I hope by the time she's old enough to really see Flemington, it still has its charm. It's getting to be the factory outlet center of the world there. When I was a kid, it was far away from everything. Now 50 miles from Manhattan isn't so far. You have major freeways to get to you to Newark Airport in 40 minutes.

***Flemington* features performances by Garry and Nils. Since the E Street Band "broke up," members have gotten together several times, including with Bruce for the *Blood Brothers* sessions.**

And for President Clinton's first inauguration. We did the *Home Alone 2* soundtrack with Darlene Love. It's weird listening to us with somebody else instead of Bruce—especially the president.

Of course, you performed with Bruce in Asbury Park late last year. Comment on the bond between the members of the E Street Band, including Bruce. Are you really like "blood brothers"?

We hadn't seen each other all together in such a long time until then. After spending that much time with anybody, the key to being successful is looking at the big picture, not let the little things get in the way. Little junk that doesn't amount to anything, that's not important. That's why I'm so into that band, because we know each other so well. We've been playing with Bruce for so long, he just has to say, "1, 2..." and we know what song he's going to do just by the way he's counting off. When we were playing that show at Tramps, man there were a couple of songs that we hadn't laid our hands on in many years that we played perfectly.

You recently mentioned that it is inevitable that the E Street Band will reunite with Bruce again. Are you like some of the other guys in the band who would drop everything to perform with him?

I think going out with the band has many good things to it, regardless of my own project. I can still work my own project while the E Street Band tours.

I think the great thing about *Blood Brothers* is that it adds to the viability of the band. The way that whole [break-up] thing came down wasn't too favorable for us. It looked like, "Okay, well, who's next? Let's get somebody else in here." The reintroduction of the band in *Blood Brothers* showed that this is the real stuff. What's really great is that it brought us to a new audience of younger people.

How did you meet Bruce?

Vini Lopez and I asked him to be in the band Child. We went through a lot of stuff together—lived in the same houses, went surfing together. It's been around 25 years for me and Bruce, first with Child, then Steel Mill. Then Bruce went through his Dr. Zoom & the Sonic Boom period with Big Danny Gallagher. I saw Big Danny in Asbury Park recently. I hadn't seen him in years.

Compare the feelings you felt returning to Asbury Park to perform with Bruce and Vini Lopez to the feelings you felt returning to Flemington to promote your new CD.

They were very similar. One of the biggest problems with going back to Flemington was realizing who I was. There was a big period there where I had no clue who I was or who I should be. It's hard to have the right perspective. I remember seeing Danny and Vini, seeing Big Danny's eyes. He was giving me that look that I was used to seeing, where I'm the Danny that they don't know. The Danny who left with Bruce and did all those things. That's fine and dandy, but that's not who I am. It takes a little time to reaffirm things with old friends. It didn't take much time to do that in Asbury Park. Vini and I had a seafood dinner and a chance to talk. There's always a real special place for me and Vini because our birthdays are a day apart (Lopez is Jan. 22, Federici is Jan. 23). We've partied a few times together.

When you performed with Bruce at the Paramount, did it take you back at all to the days with him at the Upstage?

Yeah, there are things that Bruce and I have together that go back that far. Whether it's a smile or a look or a laugh. We're talking to each other from way back. Back then, nobody could make a living playing originals, but boy, did we have originals. Bruce was writing 10 songs a day.

Is Deadeye Records going to put out other artists?

Yes, we really want to get that rolling. I don't think that bigger companies are doing artist development anymore. So we have a few artists in mind we'd like to do that with. One is Jerry Swallow. He plays surf-rock, kind of like the Ventures.

I would love to work with somebody like (Asbury Jukes guitarist) Bobby Bandiera. That guy has so much talent.

He can sing like Roy Orbison and play guitar like Keith Richards.

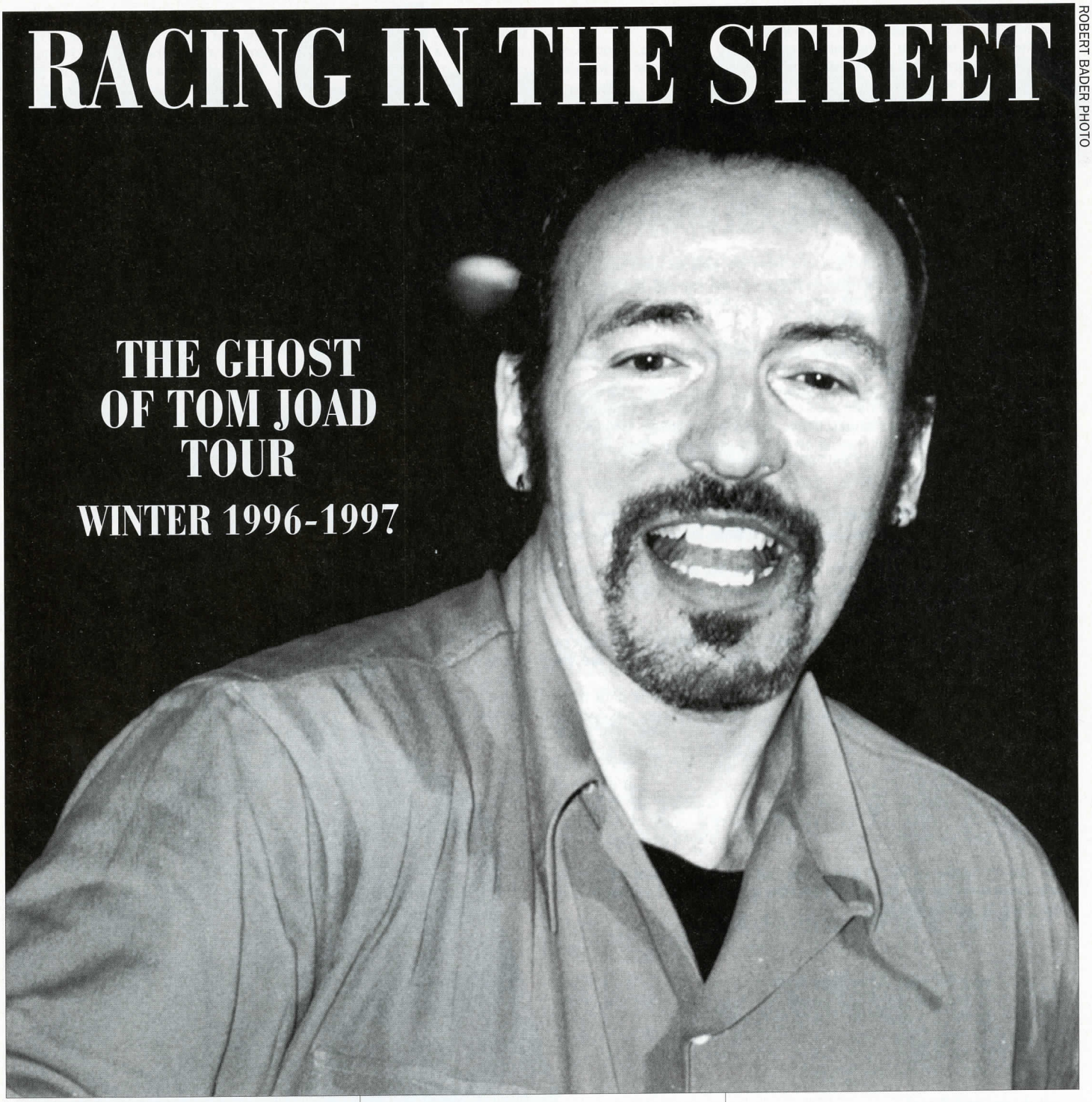
Yeah, I did a Dave Edmunds tour with him. That was a lot of fun.

How do you feel about producing your own album?

It's great to give yourself all the credit that you deserve.

PHOTO COURTESY OF DANNY FEDERICI

RACING IN THE STREET



ROBERT BADER PHOTO

12/2-3/96
SUNRISE MUSICAL THEATRE
SUNRISE, FL

12/2 SET: The Ghost of Tom Joad/Atlantic City/Straight Time/Highway 29/Darkness/Johnny 99/Mansion on the Hill/Pilgrim in the Temple of Love/Red Headed Woman/Two Hearts/Brothers Under the Bridges/Born in the USA/Dry Lightning/Long Time Coming/Sinaloa Cowboys/The Line/Balboa Park/Across the Border//Bobby Jean/This Hard Land/There'll Never Be Any Other For Me But You//If I Should Fall Behind (with Dion)/The Promised Land

12/2 NOTES: Soundcheck included "The River," "Saint in the City," "Wild Billy's Circus Story," and "Racing in the Street." "Working on the Highway" was listed on the setlist but not played. Dion DiMucci joined Bruce as a special guest during the second encore for "If I Should Fall Behind." This one performance greatly influences how Springsteen performs the song for the rest of the tour, as Bruce refines a finger-snapping doo-wop version of the song that becomes a second-encore fixture

PRESS: "SIMPLER SPRINGSTEEN ACT FULL OF PASSION, HUMOR." Fernando Gonzales in the *Miami Herald:* He is doing it out of choice, with a place to go back to, with things to look forward to, but still, like many of the characters in his songs, Bruce Springsteen is learning to do with less, facing some basic questions, stumbling about for answers. As with his characters, that he succeeds more than he fails, as he did last night in the first of two shows at the Sunrise Theatre, is less important than that he is out there trying.

"A FINE SHOW—STRINGS ATTACHED." Sean Piccoli in the *Sun-Sentinel:* ...Springsteen asked for quiet; he got it. He wanted people to listen; they did. Politely.

But what he was requesting, by inference, was indulgence and understanding from people accustomed to a larger-than-life—and louder—Bruce. In that regard, it's not certain that he

won every heart.

Sometimes, the fault was his own. "Darkness On the Edge of Town" stumbled on an out-of-tune guitar string. Springsteen foundered, too, seeming occasionally to get lost in his own monologues. There was too much setup and not enough song, as if the powerful brevity of his music had been discarded for his fireside chats....

DERRICK'S COMMENTS: Dion joined Bruce for "If I Should Fall Behind," adding his sweet and soulful voice on the first verse and chorus, middle eight (as Bruce whispered to him to get ready for the chord change) and then again at the song's end as Bruce added harmony off-mic until the song's conclusion. The crowd clapped along, with Bruce and Dion repeating the chorus on a fade. It was a stunning performance.

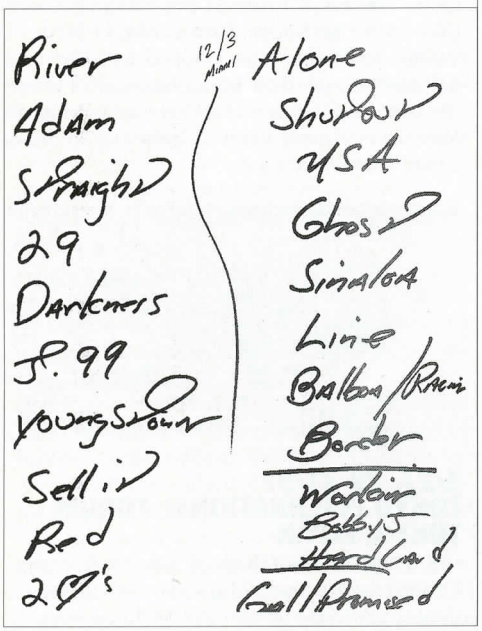
12/3 SET: The River/Adam Raised a Cain/Straight Time/Highway 29/Darkness/ Johnny 99/Youngstown/ Sell It/Red Headed Woman/Two Hearts/When You're Alone/Shut Out the Light/Born in the USA/The Ghost of Tom Joad/Sinaloa Cowboys/The Line/Balboa Park/Across the Border//Working on the Highway/This Hard Land/Racing in the Street//Galveston Bay/The Promised Land

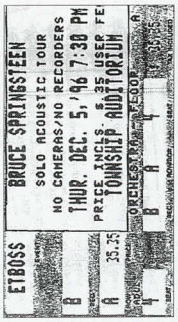
12/3 SET NOTES: A total of nine songs not played the night before.

MORON FACTOR: Toward the end of the main set one guy (decked out in denim and a bandanna) stormed out loudly, banged the exit doors open, and yelled "Rock and Roll!"

BLANCO'S COMMENTS: I flew 8 hours from Brazil just to catch both Miami shows, spent big money I saved through hard work, what can I say? A masterpiece! —*Carlos Eduardo Blanco*

MICHELE'S COMMENTS: Wow, what a show! Dion was invited back and didn't show, but there were new surprises: "The River," "When You're Alone," "Shut Out the Light"... awesome! The second show was better than the first. —*Michele Babincak.*





12/5/96 TOWNSHIP AUDITORIUM COLUMBIA, SC

12/5 SET: Same as 12/2.

MORON FACTOR: High, probably due to the fact that the bar remained open during the show.

PAT'S COMMENTS: I had the pleasure of hearing the soundcheck, where we were treated to seeing Evan give his own solo performance as he strummed his father's guitar. It was a fascinating sight to see the Boss interact with his own son. —*Pat Senft*

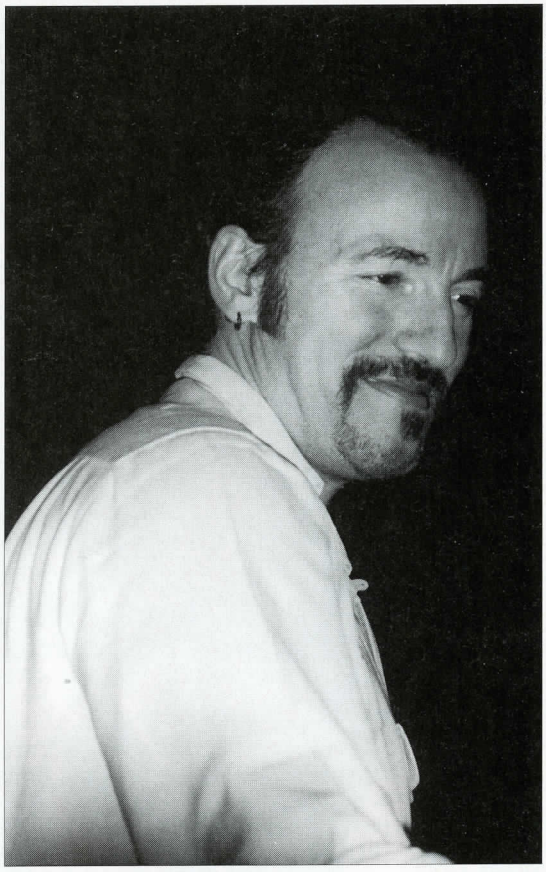
MARK'S COMMENTS: The crowd was really rowdy, with a couple people repeatedly screaming out song requests. Plus they sold beer and let people drink and eat inside. But enough negatives, the show was a great experience. The sound was pretty good, especially for such a large theater. The songs that blew me away were "Johnny 99" (incredible intro), "Long Time Coming" (a great follow-up to "Dry Lightning"), and "If I Should Fall Behind." It was a really cool doo-wop version. He had the crowd clapping along at first, but said to try snapping instead, to which he said, "Wow, that's cool." A beautiful version. —*Mark Roberts*

12/6/96 CONCERT HALL BIRMINGHAM, AL

12/6 SET: The River/Adam Raised a Cain/Straight Time/Highway 29/Darkness/ Johnny 99/Nebraska/Sell It/Red Headed Woman/Two Hearts/Brothers Under the Bridges/Born in the USA/Dry Lightning/Long Time Coming/The Ghost of Tom Joad/Sinaloa Cowboys/The Line/Balboa Park/Across the Border//Bobby Jean/This Hard Land/There'll Never Be Any Other for Me but You//If I Should Fall Behind/The Promised Land

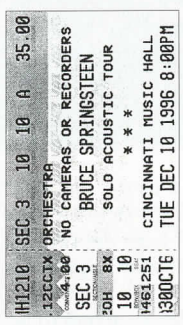
STEVE'S COMMENTS: "The River" was great and drew the biggest roar from the crowd. "Nebraska" was a neat little surprise. In my opinion, the new intro and passion behind "Johnny 99" was worth the price of admission. I would've loved to have heard "Shut Out the Light," but I guess I can't ask for everything. —*Steve Dittmore*

MARK'S COMMENTS: Great building and very good acoustics. People in the crowd were very friendly toward each other, but they didn't seem to get it. Don't get me wrong, the crowd was very quiet, but they seemed to be a little removed. Bruce was in great spirits again. It was great hearing "The River," a very deep and moving version. During the cunnilingus speech two teenagers were sitting next to me and my sister-in-law, and we heard them whisper that they didn't know what cunnilingus was! We thought that was funny. —*Mark Roberts*



CINCINNATI, 12/10/96.

CATHY VOCKE PHOTO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H461251 CINCINNATI MUSIC HALL
300CT6 TUE DEC 10 1996 8:00PM

12/10/96 MUSIC HALL CINCINNATI, OH

12/10 SET: Same as 12/2.

DOUG'S COMMENTS: The audience was wonderfully behaved; the venue was beautiful, decorated for Christmas; and Bruce was on. He was exceptionally talkative, speaking between songs far more than at any other show I've seen. —*Doug Baker*

12/11/96 VETERANS MEMORIAL AUDITORIUM COLUMBUS, OH

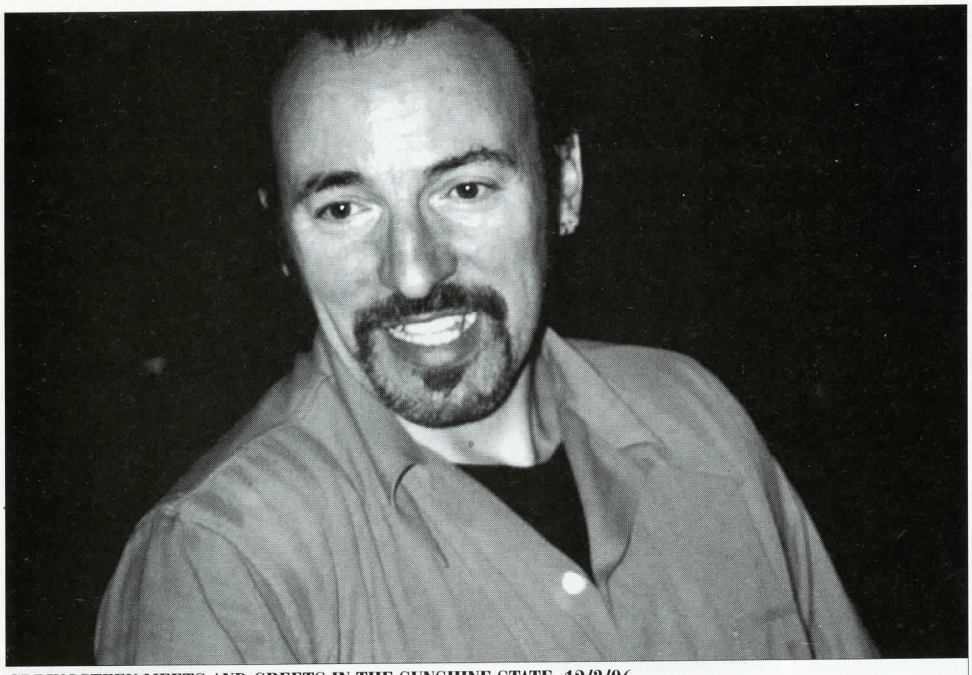
12/11 SET: Same as 12/2 with "Adam" in place of "Atlantic City," and "Youngstown" in place of "Mansion"

PRESS: "AS SPRINGSTEEN GROWS UP, SO DO HIS CONCERTS." Dennis Fiely in the *Columbus Dispatch*: ...While fans may long for the old Springsteen who worked tirelessly with the E Street Band and others to deliver some of the most energetic arena and stadium shows in the business, his softer music reveals a more complete human being.

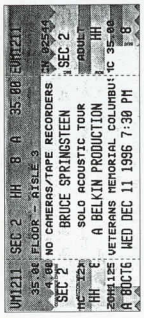
He referred to his wife and child, told childhood stories, alluded to political issues that were important to him and talked of the changes that come with aging.

Springsteen recently turned 47. What emerged was the self-portrait of a rocker who has grown up and is not afraid to admit it.

ROBERT BADER PHOTO



SPRINGSTEEN MEETS AND GREETS IN THE SUNSHINE STATE, 12/3/96.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DOUG'S COMMENTS: Bruce's focus was superior. Even though he played a similar set at the Cincy show, Bruce really played his guts out both nights. "BUSA" was tremendous tonight with a different and more intense guitar part near the end. "Long Time Coming" was magical this time around. Unlike the Cincinnati audience, the Columbus audience seemed hypnotized by the song, one of the evening's definite highlights.

Near the end of "Pilgrim," a plastic and very cheesy-looking reindeer pulling a sleigh with a Santa Claus in it was lowered from the ceiling. Bruce laughed and said, "We don't spare no dough on them special effects."

On the down-side, Vets Memorial had to be one of the ugliest facilities Bruce played on this tour. An obvious product of the '70s , the venue featured horrible orange chairs and flowered print rugs. The layout was also weird, with a huge floor section and a small balcony very far back. Good sound, though. And most importantly, the audience was impeccable, the quietest of the shows I've seen on this tour. —*Doug Baker*

12/12/96
RYMAN AUDITORIUM
NASHVILLE, TN

12/12 SET: The Ghost of Tom Joad/Atlantic City/Straight Time/Highway 29/Darkness/Johnny 99/Mansion on the Hill (with PS and ST)/Pilgrim in the Temple of Love/Red Headed Woman/Two Hearts (with PS and ST)/When You're Alone (with PS and ST)/Shut Out the Light (with PS and ST)/Born in the USA/Dry Lightning/Long Time Coming/Sinaloa Cowboys/The Line/Balboa Park/Across the Border//Bobby Jean/This Hard Land/Racing in the Street (with ST)/There'll Never Be Any Other For Me But You//If I Should Fall Behind/The Promised Land

12/12 NOTES: For the only time on the tour outside of New Jersey, Bruce was joined by Patti Scialfa and Soozie Tyrell—the "Jersey Cowgirls" as he introduced them on this night. Bruce dedicated "Racing in the Street" to Emmylou Harris, who was in the crowd (and who yelled "I'm here!" when Bruce said he wasn't sure if she was there or not). "George Jones and Tammy" were added to the string of couples in "There'll Never Be."

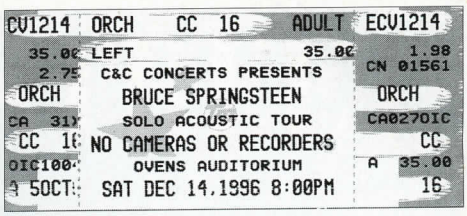
PRESS: "NASHVILLE NOTES." Dave Hoekstra in the *Chicago Sun-Times:* Last Thursday's Ryman concert was far more upbeat than his Dec. 3, 1995, appearance at the Rosemont Theatre, when the tour was just a few weeks old.

A few new songs... border on kinetic Jonathan Richman wordplay. A bawdy Christmas ballad "Pilgrim in the Temple of Love" is about meeting a perverted Santa Claus in a New Jersey strip club. As Springsteen finished the song, a dime-store blow-up Santa and sleigh fell from the rafters. "Take that, Mr. Garth Brooks," Springsteen said. "I'll show you special effects."

The Ryman audience was packed with Nashville singer-songwriters—Mary Chapin Carpenter, Shawn Colvin, Gillian Welch, Amy Grant and Gary Chapman, to name a few—and Springsteen encouraged them to record the X-rated tune for a "Country Christmas" album....

The concert clocked in at 2 1/2 hours, and Springsteen clearly was excited about playing the Ryman. He offered eloquent observations on his connection with country music, suggesting that rock 'n' roll is for "Friday and Saturday nights," while country music deals with life on a daily basis.

"Country music isn't afraid to ask hard questions about adult life," he said. "And it isn't satisfied with escapist, easy answers."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12/14/96
OVENS AUDITORIUM
CHARLOTTE, NC

12/14 SET: Same as 12/2 with "Highway Patrolman" in place of "Mansion on the Hill."

PRESS: "EVEN ACOUSTIC SPRINGSTEEN CAN BURN, BUT SUBTLY." Tommy Tomlinson in the *Charlotte Observer:* "This is the last night of my American tour," Bruce Springsteen said near the beginning of his show Saturday night at Ovens Auditorium. "So I'm going to try and give you my best."

When you get Bruce Springsteen's best, you get an amazing night, as a sellout crowd of 2,500-plus discovered.

Springsteen's normal shows—the four-hour marathons with the E Street Band—bombard fans with so much raw power that the buzz circles your head for days. But the pleasures were subtler in this two-hour-plus solo acoustic show. The music was hot, all right, but it burned from the inside out....

CHRIS'S COMMENTS: If Detroit was a 7 and Minneapolis a 10, this was an 8. I still think the new versions of "BUSA" and "Promised Land" are shattering, among the best things he's ever done. Ticket drop was said to total 17, leaving scores of people disappointed. I didn't see any scalpers, and people everywhere seemed to be looking for tickets. —*Chris Kissell*

PAT'S COMMENTS: I had the ultimate thrill of sitting front and center for the finale of this leg, as the guest of some of Bruce's cousins from Charlotte. Bruce was at his finest during his storytelling. He told one anecdote about his "old man" doing some quick thinking on his feet. When Bruce was young, he caught his father late one Christmas Eve bringing a new bike into the house. Bruce asked "Where's Santa?" His father, now trapped with the bike halfway through their front door, said, "He's on the other end." Bruce said that enabled him to have several more years of believing in Santa Claus. —*Pat Senft*

1/27, 29-31/97
TOKYO INTERNATIONAL FORUM
TOKYO, JAPAN

1/27 SET: The Ghost of Tom Joad/Atlantic City/Straight Time/Highway 29/Darkness/Johnny 99/Mansion On the Hill/Red Headed

SOOZIE TYRELL AND PATTI SCIALFA, THE "JERSEY COWGIRLS," JOIN BRUCE IN NASHVILLE, 12/12/96.

Woman/Two Hearts/Brothers Under the Bridges/Born in the USA/Dry Lightning/Spare Parts/Sinaloa Cowboys/The Line/Balboa Park/Across the Border//Bobby Jean/This Hard Land/No Surrender/Streets of Philadelphia//If I Should Fall Behind/The Promised Land

1/27 NOTES: Booklets listing the all lyrics on the new album in both English and Japanese were distributed at the theatre entrance each night in Tokyo. "The Ghost of Tom Joad" from this concert was broadcast the following night on the Japanese TV program "News Station," along with a live Springsteen interview.

PRESS: "BARE-BONES BRUCE." Drew Gibson in the *Daily Yomiuri*: ...It wasn't the fair-weather fans who packed Tokyo's newest concert hall to listen to Springsteen. Indeed, Springsteen is connecting with his audience in a way not seen since 1982's *Nebraska* or his raucous '70s tours....

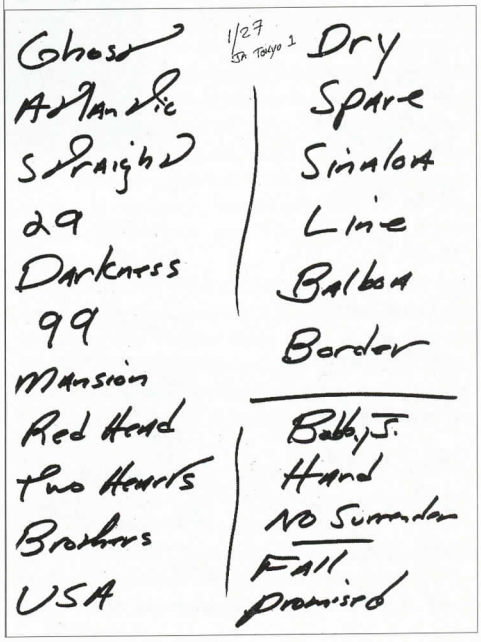
Despite the heavy subject matter of *Tom Joad*, Springsteen has not lost his sense of humor. Taking stabs at speaking in Japanese to the crowd throughout the evening, he complained at one point that his interpreter would not give him a direct translation for cunnilingus, a theme of "Red Headed Woman." After coming up with the Japanese equivalent of "unconventional sex between a man and a woman," he was awarded with a hearty round of snickering....

KEISUKE'S COMMENTS: This was Bruce's first visit to Japan in 12 years, so the audience was excited to see the shows. On the first night, Bruce looked so nervous in the beginning, but he gradually loosened up. From his past experience, he already knew that it is hard for the Japanese audience to understand English, so Sony Japan issued books of the *Tom Joad* lyrics translated into Japanese which were handed out to the audience for free before the shows. It seems Bruce instructed Sony to do this so people could understand the meaning of his lyrics, a nice idea.

I went to all four shows, but unfortunately the songs he played each night were not so different, even the order of the set. The highlights of each night to me were "Dry Lightning" and "If I Should Fall Behind." —*Keisuke Uemoto*

DAIICHIRO'S COMMENTS: The moron factor was almost nothing. Bruce looked relaxed but energetic—in other words, tight but loose. Bruce talked a lot and made a brief introduction for almost every song. He also made a good introduction speech in Japanese.

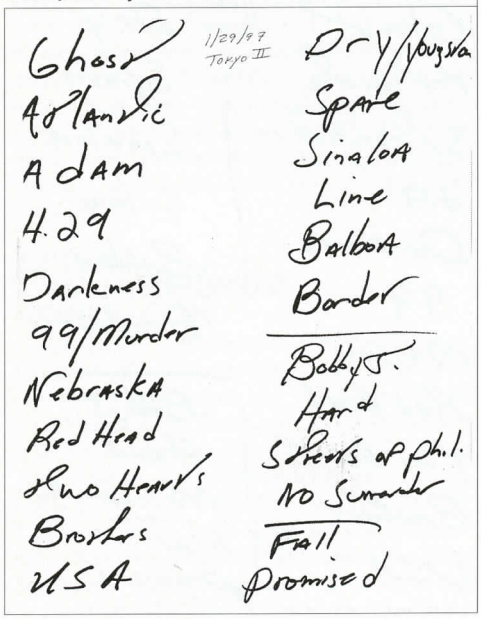
"Johnny 99," was like a rock, with a great harmonica jam intro. Bruce's vocal delivery was great on "Sinaloa Cowboys," and I was deeply impressed by his introduction to "Across the Border." Many fans were shocked and impressed by Bruce's guitar technique. Many young fans chattered about how Bruce taught



them how to play guitar.

The concert was really great and much better than the Amnesty tour. I personally believe it was also better than the *BUSA* tour. —*Daiichiro Eguchi*

1/29 SET: The Ghost of Tom Joad/Atlantic City/Adam Raised a Cain/Highway 29/Darkness/Johnny 99/Nebraska/Red Headed Woman/Two Hearts/Brothers Under the Bridges/Born in the USA/Dry Lightning/Spare Parts/Sinaloa Cowboys/The Line/Balboa Park/Across the Border//Bobby Jean/This Hard Land/Streets of Philadelphia/No Surrender//If I Should Fall Behind/The Promised Land



HIROSHI'S COMMENTS: The sound was superb—you could hear every single note of each guitar string, especially the finger-picking on "Highway 29." The moron factor was absolutely nothing—we are too polite and too quiet, I guess. There was no screaming, no Brooocing, no hand-clapping. It seemed like watching a movie in the silent house.

Bruce talked a lot in English and a little bit of Japanese, but most of us could not understand what he wanted to say. Of course, the music was addressed to us, but the language barrier is very high. Much of the audience completely cannot grab the meaning of the talk. For example, for the introductions to "Balboa Park" or "Across the Border," there was no reaction. Because 90% of us cannot understand what he says.

Secondly, the most important part of the set—that is, the border suite—is little understood here in Japan, even if we see what Bruce says in English. In Japan there are some Koreans and some Chinese, but most of us are one race. And we are surrounded by the sea, so it is so hard to understand what is like for people to "come across the border." I think it would be better to be with an interpreter for the important part. —*Hiroshi Marutani*

1/30 SET: Same as the second night except "The River" took the place of "Brothers Under the Bridges."

SHUJI'S COMMENTS: Bruce played "The River," a rare thing and one of the best songs. The arrangement of some of Bruce's hit songs such as "Born in the USA" or "Darkness" were so great and beautiful that some audience members did not know the songs until they caught lyrics in the chorus.

The strong point of the Japan concerts is the lyric cards handed to the audience before the show. It means Bruce is trying to break the wall of languages between English and Japanese. Bruce gave several introductions in Japanese, and for "Across The Border" Bruce talked about the background of this song in Japanese. However, most were in English, so most people cannot understand his talks. What is more, one of the main concepts of this concert is making audiences listen to the lyrics word for word and think about it, and the meaning of this concepts is less useful in Japan (of course because most Japanese, like myself, are non-native English speakers). But the show itself is very brilliant, and the audience tried to listen to his songs carefully and quietly. —*Shuji Tanisho*

1/31 SET: The Ghost of Tom Joad/Atlantic City/Adam Raised a Cain/Highway 29/Darkness/Murder Inc./Highway Patrolman/Red Headed Woman/Two Hearts/The River/Born in the USA/Dry Lightning/Youngstown/Spare Parts/Sinaloa Cowboys/The Line/Balboa Park/Across the Border//Bobby Jean/This Hard Land/No Surrender//Galveston Bay/If I Should Fall Behind/The Promised Land

HIROSHI'S COMMENTS: The sound is crystal clear, performance is fantastic. It's great to have the same show in the states, but the language barrier is so high. Of course Bruce knows about the language barrier and we all enjoy the show, what the music is about. But after the show, I heard not a few people saying "I don't understand what he says before the song. I feel like sleeping when he started to talk in English." I think the language barrier even higher than Bruce would understand here in Japan. *—Hiroshi Marutani*

DAIICHIRO'S COMMENTS: "Murder Inc.," "Highway Patrolman," "Youngstown," and "Galveston Bay" all had their Japanese debut, and all were great great great! "Galveston Bay" was dedicated to Hisashi Miura, who translated the lyrics for the whole *The Ghost of Tom Joad* album. This was the best of the four nights. *—Daiichiro Eguchi*

DAVID'S COMMENTS: Bruce's humor and English didn't carry well; only he laughed at his jokes. One guy we talked to later didn't care—he enjoys the *funiki* (atmosphere). He likes Bruce for the way he combines athleticism and theatrics in his performances: "like a sumo wrestler and a kabuki actor." *—David Gregory*

2/4-5/97 QPAC CENTRE BRISBANE, AUSTRALIA

2/4 SET: The Ghost of Tom Joad/Atlantic City/Straight Time/Highway 29/Darkness/Johnny 99/Nebraska/The Wish/Red Headed Woman/Two Hearts/Brothers Under the Bridges/Born in the USA/Dry Lightning/Long Time Coming/Sinaloa Cowboys/The Line/Balboa Park/Across the Border//Bobby Jean/This Hard Land/There'll Never Be Any Other For Me But You//If I Should Fall Behind/The Promised Land

PRESS: "BRUCE, UNPLUGGED BUT ELECTRIC." Noel Mengel in the *Brisbane Courier Mail*: ...As the years go by, the strength of these two records [*Nebraska* and *The Ghost of Tom Joad*] becomes more clear, and songs that at first seemed little more than quiet murmurs reveal their power.

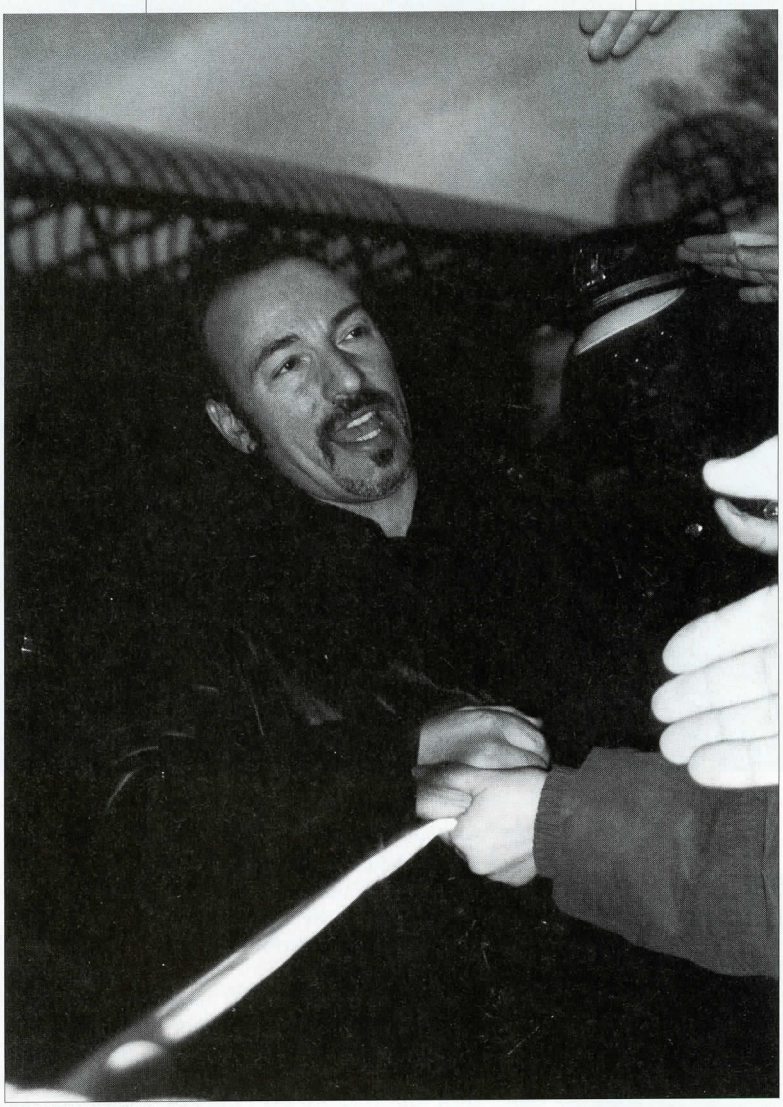
...For some, playing to 2000 people at the Concert Hall might be some fall from grace after having played to 40,000 people at ANZ Stadium.

But not for Springsteen because, long after the screaming dies away, this music will survive as testament to one of the greatest songwriters of our age.

BORIS'S COMMENTS: I just went to my first ever Bruce concert, sort of been waiting for that ever since I was born. At the same time that Bruce was playing, the Phantom of the Opera was on next door, so you had an interesting mix of people in the foyer.

During the first chorus of "Darkness" right where he sings "in the Darkness..." the lights went completely out, but eventually came back on in about 20 seconds. After the song Bruce said, "Man, when I said 'darkness,' it went completely fuckin' dark, that's really clever!" with people laughing their heads off, of course. This kind of light humor, mixed in with seriousness, remained for the entire night.

He did all the regular spiels that I've read about before, but to the audience, including myself, it was still affecting. The falsetto at the end of "Across the Border" was magical and one of the highlights of the show, and Bruce's slide playing on "BUSA" was fierce, real dogs' balls stuff, he should do more of this type of thing on record. *—Boris Babic*



JERRY FLOYD PHOTO

CINCINNATI, 12/10/96

2/5 SET: The Ghost of Tom Joad/Adam Raised a Cain/Straight Time/Highway 29/Darkness/Johnny 99/Highway Patrolman/Little Things/Red Headed Woman/Two Hearts/Brothers Under the Bridges/Born in the USA/Dry Lightning/Long Time Coming/Sinaloa Cowboys/The Line/Balboa Park/Across the Border//Does This Bus Stop/This Hard Land/There'll Never Be Any Other For Me But You//If I Should Fall Behind/The Promised Land

BORIS'S COMMENTS:

Well this show for me was not as good as the first one—more like 99 out of 100. The biggest highlight of the night was definitely saved for the encores, "one for long time fans," or something along those lines. He then launched into a juggernaut version of "Does this Bus Stop," absolute ripper!

The a cappella intro of "If I Should Fall Behind", with the whistling and little Bruce-type moans, really makes this a stand out song. This is simply one of the nicest Springsteen songs ever.

The song intros were all pretty much the same as the previous night, but they still got a great response, especially the "growling her out" speech—that's Australian for "cunnilingus." *—Boris Babic*

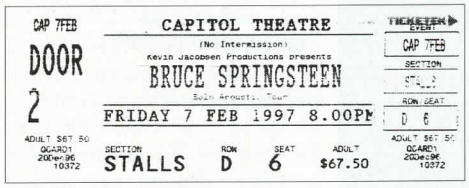
BILL'S COMMENTS: What a set of shows in Brisbane. Bruce was in good voice and even better spirits, and it seems that as the tour gets longer the shows get better. The only two songs I hadn't seen from my ventures to the States last year were "Two Hearts" and "If I Should Fall Behind," and I was not disappointed with the new arrangements. It was nice not to see "Sell It" or "Pilgrim" again—give me "The Wish" or "Little Things" any day!

The intro to "Red Headed Woman" was well received by the Australian audience. I think the laughter was louder here than in the States. Maybe Aussies are more open about sex. Bruce added some Aussie flavor to his narrative, saying "they don't call Australia 'Down Under' for nothing!"

Merchandising is primarily the same but twice the cost. The botched cream shirts from the second leg (the ones with the first leg printed) were on sale with Tokyo, Brisbane, Sydney and Melbourne added to the bottom. A bit rude, but who would know down here! *—Bill Donohoe*

ROGER FROEHLICH PHOTO

COLUMBUS, 12/11/96.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CAPITOL THEATRE
(No Intermission)
Kevin Jacobsen Productions presents
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BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN
Solo Acoustic Tour
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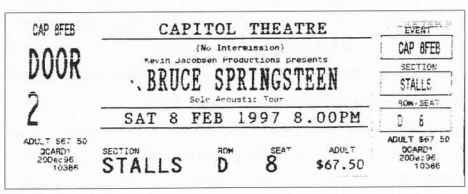
2/7-8, 10-12/97 CAPITOL THEATRE SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA

2/7 SET: The Ghost of Tom Joad/Atlantic City/Straight Time/Highway 29/Darkness/Johnny 99/Highway Patrolman/Little Things/Red Headed Woman/Two Hearts/Brothers Under the Bridges/Born in the USA/Dry Lightning/Long Time Coming/Sinaloa Cowboys/The Line/Balboa Park/Across the Border//Does This Bus Stop/This Hard Land/There'll Never Be Any Other For Me But You//Galveston Bay/If I Should Fall Behind/The Promised Land

PRESS: "SOLO CHARMER WAS BORN TO RUN WITH IT." Richard Jinman in *The Australian:* The music playing over the PA system prior to Bruce Springsteen's arrival is a declaration of sorts. Hank Williams, Johnny Cash, Woody Guthrie. These are the legendary cartographers of small town America's psychic geography with whom Springsteen now aligns himself. For just about any other performer it would be a vain, self-deluding claim. But after two mesmerizing hours of the solo artist-formerly-known-as-The Boss, it seemed perfectly justified. This was a triumphant performance of humor, insight and aching honesty.

SCOTT'S COMMENTS: We didn't have tickets, but we waited out front. About 30 minutes into the show people started coming out—when we asked one bloke if he was leaving, he said, "Yeah, too slow for me. You can have my ticket." So we were in for the second half of the show. —*Scott Johnson*


CAP 8FEB
CAPITOL THEATRE
(No Intermission)
Kevin Jacobsen Productions presents
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BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN
Solo Acoustic Tour
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SAT 8 FEB 1997 8.00PM
ADULT $67.50
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2/8 SET: The Ghost of Tom Joad/Adam Raised a Cain/Straight Time/Highway 29/Darkness/Murder Incorporated/Mansion on the Hill/Pilgrim in the Temple of Love/Red Headed Woman/Two Hearts/Brothers Under the Bridges/Born in the USA/Dry Lightning/Long Time Coming/Spare Parts/Sinaloa Cowboys/The Line/Balboa Park/Across the Border//Bobby Jean/This Hard Land/There'll Never Be Any Other For Me But You//If I Should Fall Behind/The Promised Land

PRESS: "SPRINGSTEEN'S SECOND COMING." Bruce Elder in the *Sydney Morning Herald:* ...Springsteen should realize that, by turning his back on rock 'n' roll and entering the world of guitar-playing singer/songwriter, he has decided to take on the big boys. For all his performance skills, he still cannot compare with the genius of Christy Moore. In terms of insightful patter about the human condition, Springsteen runs a distant second to Loudon Wainwright III and, in spite of his excellent guitar playing, he's now in competition with the peerless Richard Thompson. He must always recognize that he attracts an audience because of the popularity of his past work—not because he is the best singer/songwriter currently playing the circuit.

But yes, it was a great show—powerful, deeply moving and beautifully constructed. Springsteen should be welcomed to the singer/songwriter Olympian heights with enthusiasm. He is a very worthy addition.

2/10 SET: The Ghost of Tom Joad/Atlantic City/Straight Time/Highway 29/Darkness/Johnny 99/Point Blank/The Wish/Red Headed Woman/Two Hearts/The River/Born in the

USA/Dry Lightning/Long Time Coming/ Youngstown/Sinaloa Cowboys/The Line/Balboa Park/Across the Border//Blinded By the Light/This Hard Land/ There'll Never Be Any Other For Me But You// If I Should Fall Behind/The Promised Land

BILL'S COMMENTS: Tonight's show was something special. My 17th of the tour and I think it is close to the best I have seen. Special moments everywhere. "Johnny 99" had a new slow ending, and "Blinded" was a killer version with no mistakes! Bruce was in great form, voice and humor, and the audience was the best so far in Oz. *—Bill Donohoe*

BRUCE'S COMMENTS: To my mind, despite the nature of the material and the absence of the E Streeters, this show is up there with those other great Capitol Theatre Shows (Passaic, NJ) and the Winterland gigs. After a story about a park just down the road from his house in his home town, Bruce dedicated "Born in the USA" to "any Australian vets out there tonight." He said "The Wish" was a request, and dedicated "Blinded by the Light" to "all the old, old, *old* fans out there." Naturally, we all thought he was going to do "Does This Bus Stop"—you can imagine our surprise when we heard "Madman drummers, bummers, and Indians in the summer with a teenage diplomat..." *—Bruce Williams*

2/11 SET: The Ghost of Tom Joad/Adam Raised a Cain/Straight Time/Highway 29/Darkness/Johnny 99/Point Blank/In Freehold/Red Headed Woman/Two Hearts/The River/Born in the USA/Dry Lightning/Long Time Coming/Sinaloa Cowboys/The Line/Balboa Park/Across the Border//Blinded By the Light/This Hard Land/Streets of Philadelphia/There'll Never Be Any Other For Me But You//If I Should Fall Behind/The Promised Land

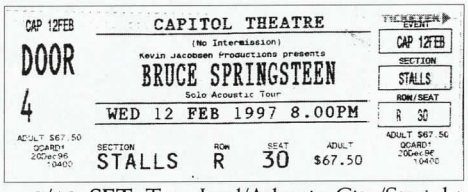
BILL'S COMMENTS: Similar to last night's show with a couple of exceptions: "In Freehold" and "Streets of Philadelphia" were included. The audience was good again; I think they are starting to get the hang of it now, though every now and than someone would yell out for "Thunder Road" or "Dancing in the Dark."

I still can't believe that he played "In Freehold"! Someone out back had requested the song before the show, and he said after the show that he was happy with the response it got from the Sydney audience. *—Bill Donohoe*

TERRY & MARIA'S COMMENTS: We attended all five of Bruce's shows in Sydney. The first night was great. Before the show there was so much excitement in the air. We just couldn't believe that after twelve long years we were about to see Springsteen live again in less than half an hour. I wouldn't have thought it possible after that first show, but each night it just got better and better.

There were many highlights, but the biggest for us was meeting Bruce before the 2/11 show and requesting "In Freehold" but not in my wildest dreams expecting that he would do it. I nearly fell out of my seat when he introduced it. Our friends that were there that night couldn't believe it either.

He said, "I've only done this once before and I fucked it up. But this guy out back asked for it, so I'll give it another go. This is for Terry and Maria." Wow! To actually meet your hero and then a couple of hours later have him play a song for you (especially one that he has said he'd never do again) is one hell of a feeling. *—Terry & Maria DeCoster*



2/12 SET: Tom Joad/Atlantic City/Straight Time/Highway 29/Darkness/Murder Incorporated/Highway Patrolman/In Freehold/Red Headed Woman/Two Hearts/Brothers Under the Bridges/Born in the USA/Dry Lightning/Long Time Coming/Sinaloa Cowboys/The Line/The Ghost of Tom Joad/Across the Border//Working on the Highway/No Surrender/There'll Never Be Any Other For Me But You// If I Should Fall Behind/The Promised Land

BILL'S COMMENTS: The fifth Sydney was another great night. Bruce was enjoying himself throughout the show. Bruce was constantly changing the set list all the way through, and Kevin couldn't get the right guitar with all the changes. This happened at least four times. For the second night in a row we heard "In Freehold." Bruce opened with "Tom Joad" and played "Ghost of Tom Joad" in the middle of the border set. "Ghost" before "Across the Border" seemed to fit really well. "Working on the Highway" was a lot of fun. *—Bill Donohoe*

TINA'S COMMENTS: The last Sydney show I thought was the best, starting with Woody Guthrie's "Tom Joad" and including "In Freehold." What a great song! He introduced "In Freehold" extensively, telling about the benefit he played at his old school, and explaining the mood of growing up in Freehold and why he wanted to get out of there. The man is a great storyteller, and told of his life with great humor and no regrets.

He seemed blown away by the way he had been received in Australia, and he promised that it wouldn't be another 12 years before he came back. I hope that's true. *—Tina Boettcher*

2/15-17/97 PALAIS THEATRE MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA

2/15 SET: The Ghost of Tom Joad/Atlantic City/Straight Time/Highway 29/Darkness/Johnny 99/Point Blank/In Freehold/Red Headed Woman/Two Hearts/Brothers Under the Bridges/Born in the USA/Dry Lightning/Long Time Coming/Sinaloa Cowboys/The Line/Balboa Park/Across the Border//Bobby Jean/This Hard Land/No Surrender/There'll Never Be Any Other For Me But You//Sandy/The Promised Land

2/15 SET NOTES: The only appearance of "Sandy" on the entire tour outside of Asbury Park.

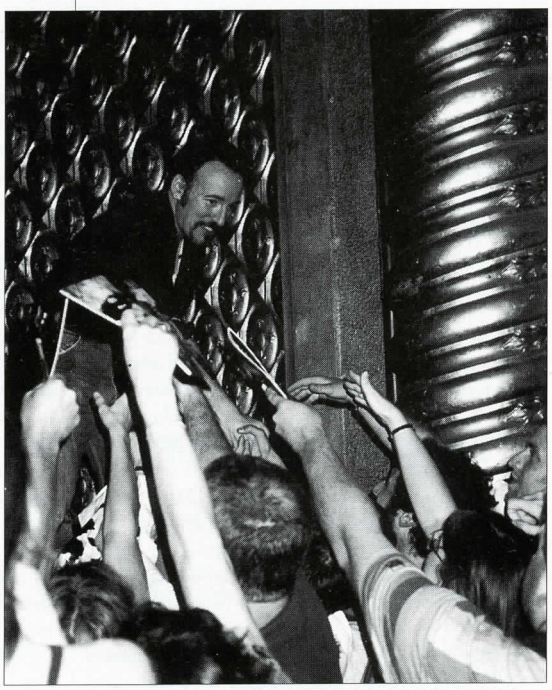
2/15 PRESS: "SOLO SPRINGSTEEN EVOKES GHOSTS FROM THE PAST." Dugald Jellie in the *Melbourne Age*: ...the imagery of much of the night revolved around illegal immigrant workers, the desert, petty criminals, border patrols, and ordinary people driving pick-up, trucks and chasing the American Dream. How ironic then, that between songs he referred to Kiss—four boys with their faces painted, reveling in that same dream—playing at Melbourne Park.

There was much that was different about this show—including a bottleneck blues reinvention of his trademark hit "Born in the USA"—but also much that was the same. Many of the songs—"Highway 29," "Darkness on the Edge of Town," "Johnny 99"—were rooted so much in the past that at times it sounded like Springsteen was slipping into nostalgia and sentimentality.

For this reviewer, the enduring thought of the night was that Springsteen is irrevocably lonely and restless. This is one of his greatest weaknesses, but also one of his great strengths, highlighted by his rollicking encore version of "Bobby Jean." It is a beautiful song, written by a hopeless romantic for hopeless romantics. It was, in truth, that sort of night.

KEN'S COMMENTS: The Palais Theatre is next door to Luna Park, an amusement park with a small roller coaster. The special performance of "Sandy" during the second encore was, Bruce said, because he'd never played a venue where he had a roller coaster outside his dressing room window!

Bruce was in a very good mood, saying that he'd had a good time in Australia and that, here in Melbourne, he'd managed to avoid the Kiss Army at his hotel (Kiss played Melbourne on 2/13-15, and the band stayed at the same hotel as Bruce, the Como Hotel in South Yarra). *—Ken Chau*



KEN CHAU PHOTO

END OF THE ROAD: WRAPPING THINGS UP IN MELBOURNE.

KEN CHAU PHOTO

THE ROLLERCOASTER JUST TO THE LEFT OF THE PALAIS INSPIRED BRUCE TO PLAY "SANDY."

2/16 SET: The Ghost of Tom Joad/Adam Raised a Cain/Straight Time/Highway 29/Darkness/Murder Inc./Nebraska/In Freehold/Red Headed Woman/Two Hearts/The River/Born in the USA/Dry Lightning/Reason to Believe/Sinaloa Cowboys/The Line/Balboa Park/Across the Border//Blinded by the Light/This Hard Land/Streets of Philadelphia/There'll Never Be Any Other For Me But You//Racing in the Street/The Promised Land

2/16 SET NOTES: The set changes more than usual, with eight different songs from the night before.

KEN'S COMMENTS: I enjoyed this concert even better than the first night, and in retrospect it was definitely the best of the three. Though Bruce was still good humored, he seemed more intense tonight with the inclusion of "Adam," "Murder Inc.," "Nebraska," "The River," and a dark and stunning "Reason to Believe" in the main set.

The encores were great, especially "Blinded" and a lovely version of "Streets of Philadelphia." But the big surprise was "Racing in the Street," one of my favorite songs, which he played for some girl who'd been requesting it. I thought he was going to play "Sandy" again as he was introducing it as a rarity, but when he sang "I got a '69 Chevy with a 396" I couldn't believe what I was hearing. With "The Promised Land," that final encore was a killer one-two punch, and it worked so well that he repeated it on the third night. —*Ken Chau*

2/17 SET: Tom Joad/Atlantic City/Straight Time/Highway 29/Darkness/Johnny 99/Highway Patrolman/In Freehold/Red Headed Woman/Two Hearts/Brothers Under the Bridges/Born in the USA/Dry Lightning/Long Time Coming/Sinaloa Cowboys/The Line/Galveston Bay/Across the Border//Working on the Highway/This Hard Land/No Surrender/There'll Never Be Any Other For Me But You//Racing in the Street/The Promised Land

JEREMY'S COMMENTS: I was the only person with my ear to the side door to hear the soundcheck—*Backstreets* has taught me well! The *Tom Joad* material was unbelievable, but songs over the three nights such as "Sandy," "Blinded by the Light," "In Freehold," "The River," "Johnny 99"—the list goes on—were mind-blowing. I don't have three or four tours as a reference, but I can't imagine too many shows beating Melbourne for song selection, sound, and atmosphere. Even the moron factor didn't concern me; of course, there was a fair share of Brooocing and song requests, but Bruce was in an excellent mood and these people had been waiting 12 years for another visit. —*Jeremy Parkinson*

BILL'S COMMENTS: During the narrative to "Across the Border," when Bruce was talking about how music influenced him as a child, in the kitchen (whilst eating his corn flakes) he mentioned that the novelty song "Purple People Eater" was one of the first songs that had such an impact on him. When the audience responded with puzzled faces he proceeded to sing a couple of lines: "I said 'Hey there Mr. Purple eater, What's your line'/He said, 'Eating purple people and it sure is fine'." At the time I thought he was going to continue—does this count as a song performance?

The crowd was the worst so far. From "Born in the USA" onwards people kept taking flash photographs. Bruce asked the audience to stop a couple of times but they did not listen. He was clearly getting upset and when he stopped and stepped forward asking the audience to get it out of their system and take photos they took this as a license to continue even more through the end of the show. Extremely disappointing and the only night of the tour not to feature an Oz tour debut.

The second night in Melbourne was the best of the Melbourne shows, and I still vote the third show in Sydney as one of the best of the tour.

"Sandy," "Reason to Believe" and "Racing in the Street" were definite highlights in Melbourne. "Freehold" has become very entertaining. Bruce sets up the scene perfectly so all the fans not familiar with the Freehold show can relate to the "hero comes home" story. It makes for a very special part of the night, and the line about his dedication to Freehold at the end of the song gets one of the biggest laughs of the show. —*Bill Donohoe*

KEN'S COMMENTS: Worst crowd of the three nights, lots of people taking photos, and the only show I saw where Bruce gave his "shut the fuck up" speech. Strange concert, it was great but it just couldn't live up to the brilliant second night, and I think it was the least satisfying of the three shows. Slipping "Galveston Bay" into the border suite instead of "Balboa Park" was a surprise. It's one of my favorite songs on *Joad*, as I'm the son of Chinese immigrants in Australia, and the issues of racism and immigration are prevalent in our country as in the U.S., as Springsteen said during his intro to "The Line."

He played "Racing" again, saying how much he had enjoyed the Australia summer, and that back home it was cold right now. "The Promised Land" was again a highlight, and for each concert the high point of the show. When he sang the final verse, there was a silence in the crowd as if spellbound or hypnotized by this breathtaking version. A truly marvelous encore, the antithesis of an encore at a rock 'n' roll show where generally the singer/band tries to raise the energy level. Here he keeps the energy level down, but the intensity burns through your soul. Awesome. —*Ken Chau*

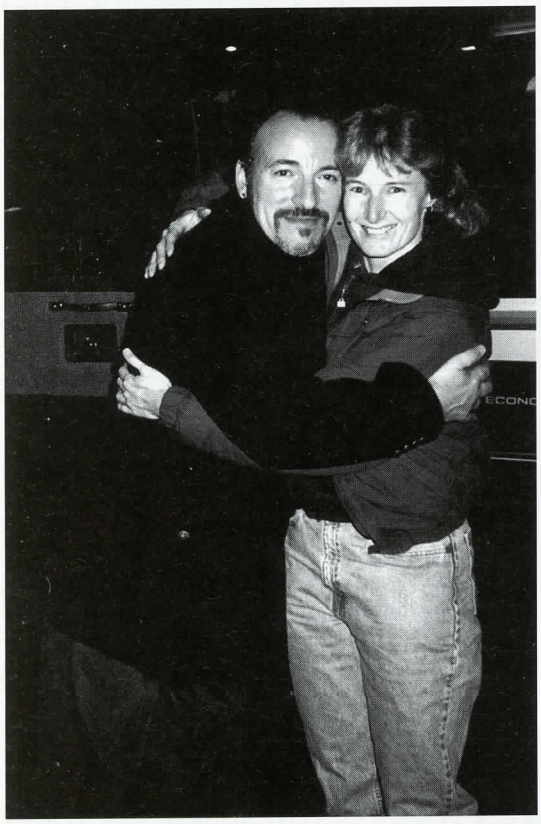
Tour report compiled by Christopher Phillips. Tour coverage will continue in *Backstreets* #56 with more European dates. E-mail your comments on upcoming shows to: iamtomjoad@aol.com. We also welcome comments, reviews, press, photos, ticket stubs, etc. by mail or by fax (206-728-8827). Many thanks to everyone who's kept us posted on the tour so far—the help we receive from readers is essential!

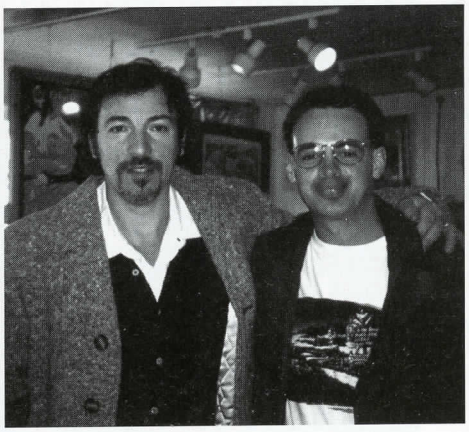
Special thanks this time to: Rhonda Agliano, Ann Anderson, Boris Babic, Michele Babincak, Robert Bader, Doug Baker, Ken Baum, Johan Bjernick, Carlos Eduardo Blanco, Tina Boettcher, Ken Chau, Bob Crane, Marc J. Cohen, Andrew Cogdell, Michael Cory, Mary Ellen D'Entremont, Catherine Devine, Sal DiMaria, Frank Distasi, Steve Dittmore, Bill Donohoe, Daiichiro Eguchi, Jerry Floyd,Roger Froehlich, Michael Given, John Graveur, David Gregory, Brian Helgesen, Rich Henkel, Bill Henry, Jedda Hingston, Stephen Hogge, Mike Hollander, Carl Hughes, Hisako Suzuki Ito, Scott Johnson, Donna Landes, Ken Lesnik, Brad Kaplus, Karen Kelly, Bill King II, Chris Kissell, Donna Landis, Lee Levack, Joe Lewin, Gerry Linarducci, Kirk Marley, Phil Martin, Hiroshi Marutani, Charley McGrane, Jim Miller, Adam Moore, Matt Moran, Hideaki Oya, Chris Papaleonardos, Jeremy Parkinson, James Pascoe, Jackie Pollack, Jim Ragsdale, Sue Raaymakers, Regina Rahey, Jeff Reddig, Robert Rizzuti, Mark Roberts, Debbie Rothenberg, Joe Salerno, Gordon Schreiber, Patrick Senft, Jeffrey Simone, Rene Slegers, Steve Stathis, John Stolar, Kevin Sutton, Shuji Tanisho, Salvador Trepat, Keisuke Uemoto, Rene van Diemen, Kathleen Walker, Janne Watteus, Shayne Wicks, Bruce Williams, Cheryl Wilson, John Wooding, plus all the other fans who sent clippings and photos, faxed a review, gave us an update or otherwise helped us out.

WINTER 1996-1997

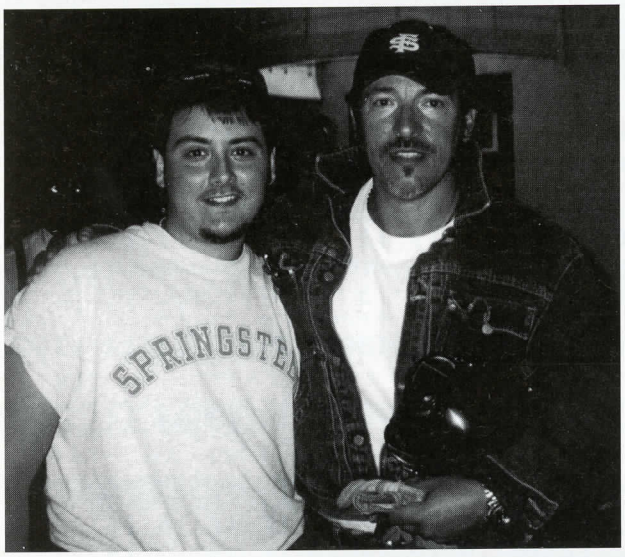
	DECEMBER								JANUARY				FEBRUARY									
	Sunrise	*Sunrise*	*Columbia*	*Birmingham*	*Cincinnati*	*Columbus*	*Nashville*	*Charlotte*	*Tokyo*	*Tokyo*	*Tokyo*	*Tokyo*	*Brisbane*	*Brisbane*	*Sydney*	*Sydney*	*Sydney*	*Sydney*	*Sydney*	*Melbourne*	*Melbourne*	*Melbourne*
	2 FL	**3 FL**	**5 SC**	**6 AL**	**10 OH**	**11 OH**	**12 TN**	**14 NC**	**27 JAP**	**29 JAP**	**30 JAP**	**31 JAP**	**4 AUS**	**5 AUS**	**7 AUS**	**8 AUS**	**10 AUS**	**11 AUS**	**12 AUS**	**15 AUS**	**16 AUS**	**17 AUS**
GHOST OF TOM JOAD	1	14	1	15	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	17	1	1	
TOM JOAD																			1			1
THE RIVER		1		1							10	10					11	11			11	
ATLANTIC CITY	2		2		2		2	2	2	2	2	2	2		2		2		2	2		2
ADAM RAISED A CAIN		2		2		2				3	3	3		2		2		2			2	
STRAIGHT TIME	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3				3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
HIGHWAY 29	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
DARKNESS	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
JOHNNY 99	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6		6	6	6		6	6		6		6
MURDER INC.												6				6			6		6	
POINT BLANK																	7	7		7		
MANSION ON THE HILL	7		7		7		7		7							7						
HIGHWAY PATROLMAN								7				7		7	7				7			7
LITTLE THINGS														8	8							
YOUNGSTOWN		7				7						13					15					
NEBRASKA				7						7	7		7								7	
THE WISH													8				8					
PILGRIM	8		8		8	8	8	8								8						
SELL IT		8		8																		
IN FREEHOLD																		8	8	8	8	8
RED HEADED WOMAN	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	8	8	8	8	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9
TWO HEARTS	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	9	9	9	9	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
WHEN YOU'RE ALONE		11					11															
BROTHERS	11		11	11	11	11		11	10	10			11	11	11	11			11	11		11
SHUT OUT THE LIGHT		12					12															
BORN IN THE USA	12	13	12	12	12	12	13	12	11	11	11	11	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12
DRY LIGHTNING	13		13	13	13	13	14	13	12	12	12	12	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	13
REASON TO BELIEVE																					14	
LONG TIME COMING	14		14	14	14	14	15	14					14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14		14
SPARE PARTS									13	13	13	14				15						
SINALOA COWBOYS	15	15	15	16	15	15	16	15	14	14	14	15	15	15	15	16	16	15	15	15	15	15
THE LINE	16	16	16	17	16	16	17	16	15	15	15	16	16	16	16	17	17	16	16	16	16	16
BALBOA PARK	17	17	17	18	17	17	18	17	16	16	16	17	17	17	17	18	18	17		17	17	
ACROSS THE BORDER	18	18	18	19	18	18	19	18	17	17	17	18	18	18	18	19	19	18	18	18	18	18
WORKING ON THE HWY		19																	19			19
BOBBY JEAN	19		19	20	19	19	20	19	18	18	18	19	19			20				19		
BLINDED BY THE LIGHT																	20	19			19	
DOES THIS BUS STOP														19	19							
THIS HARD LAND	20	20	20	21	20	20	21	20	19	19	19	20	20	20	20	21	21	20		20	20	20
NO SURRENDER									20	21	21	21							20	21		21
STREETS OF PHILLY									21	20	20							21			21	
THERE'LL NEVER BE	21		21	22	21	21	23	21					21	21	21	22	22	22	21	22	22	22
SANDY																				23		
RACING IN THE STREET		21					22														23	23
GALVESTON BAY		22					24					22			22							17
IF I SHOULD FALL BEHIND	22		22	23	22	22		22	22	22	22	23	22	22	23	23	23	23	23			
PROMISED LAND	23	23	23	24	23	23	25	23	23	23	23	24	23	23	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24

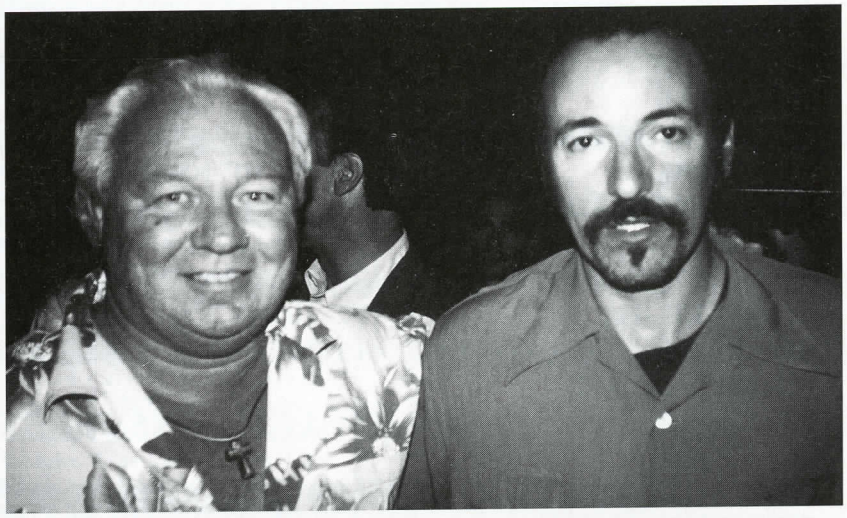
CLOSE ENCOUNTERS

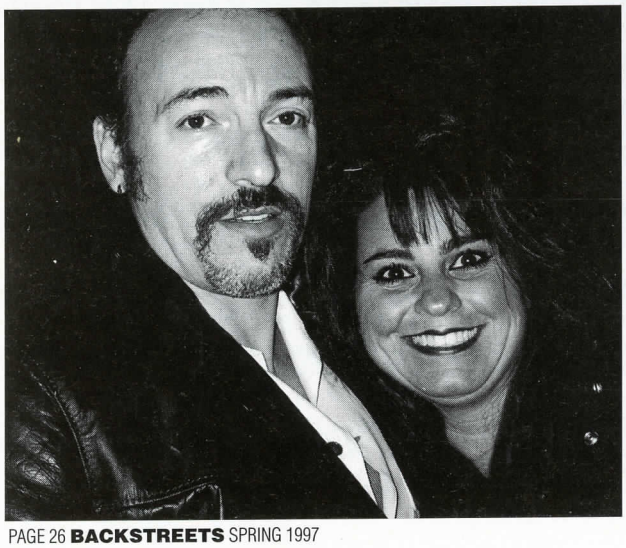


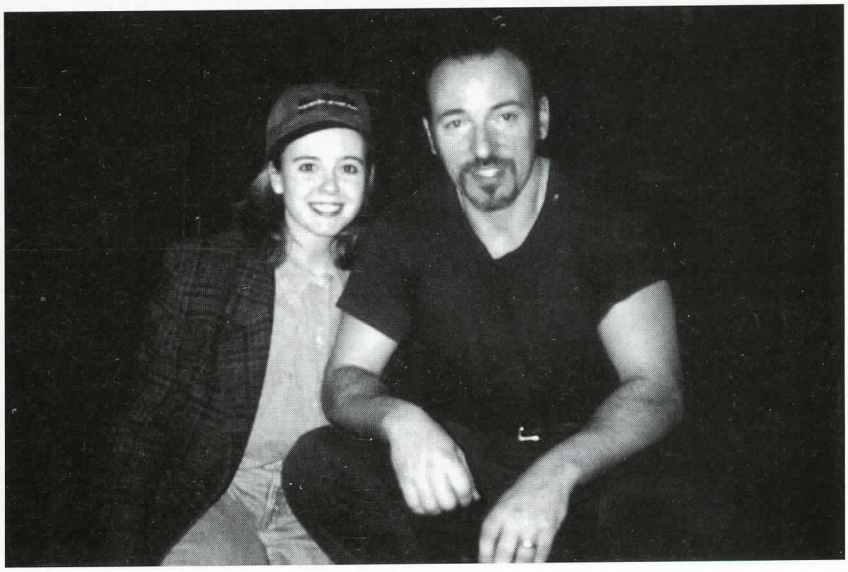


This page, clockwise from top left: Kathy Cox got a hug at Logan Airport; Vince Martin and his wife Lori (not pictured) bumped into Bruce at a Red Bank antique shop; Stephen Gelobter, back in December 1995; Kenny Barr and Bruce, "Two Jersey guys from way back," at Severance Hall in Cleveland; Margaret Znidarsic in Youngstown; Lisa Vitale, greeting Springsteen just before soundcheck in Asbury Park last November; Sal DiMaria, outside Cheers in Long Branch, NJ, in July '96.









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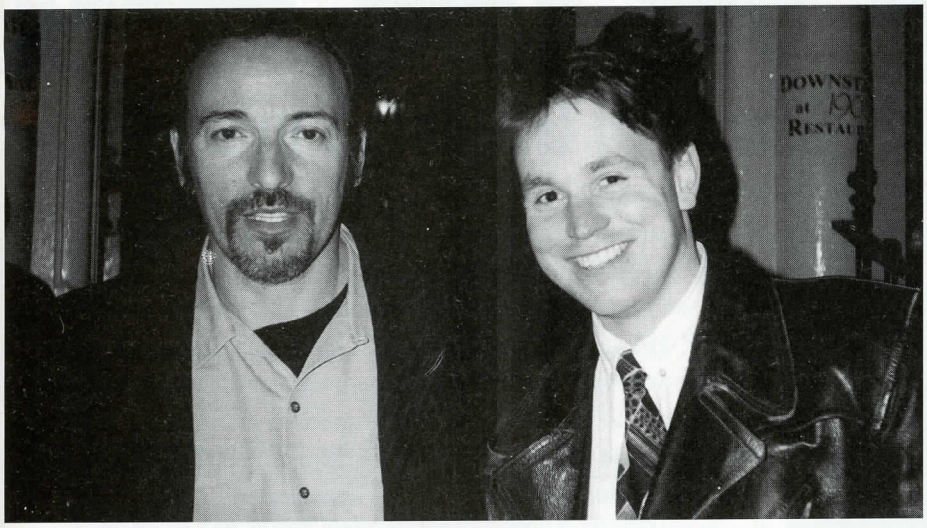
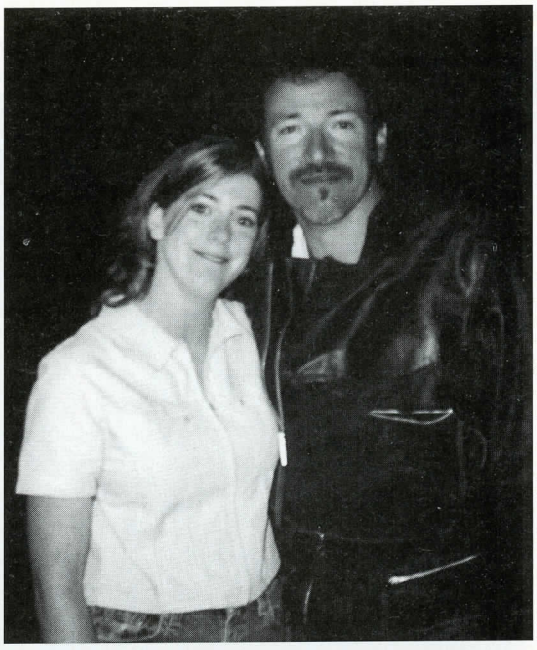
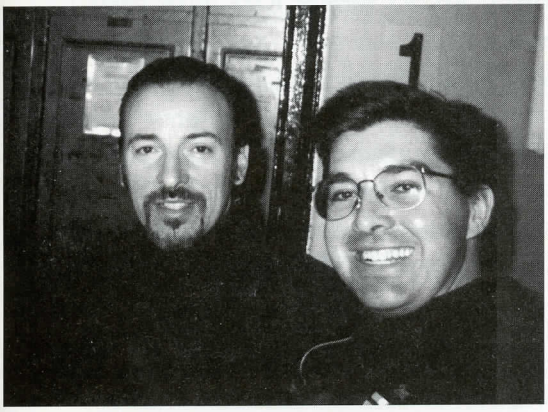
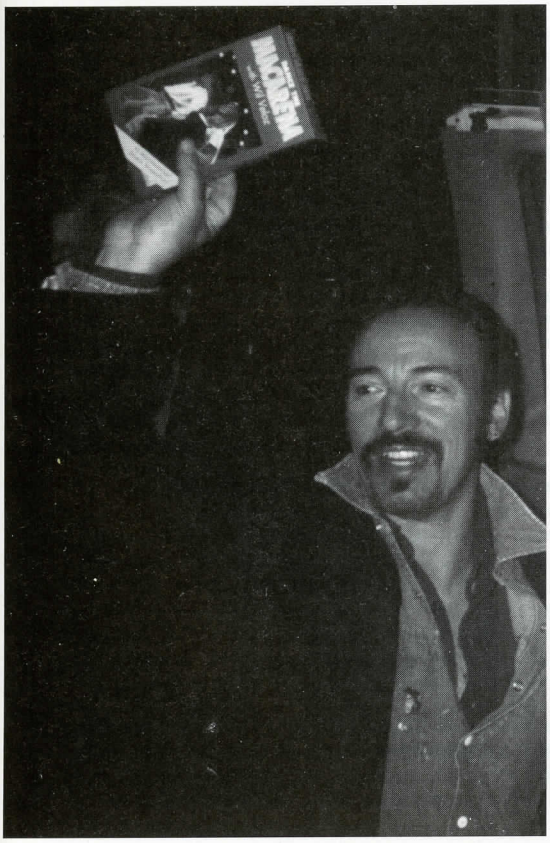




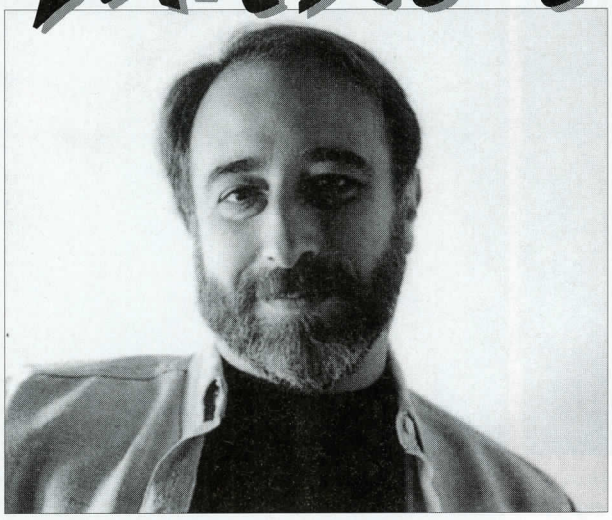


This page, clockwise from top left: Robert Jansen, after the first Royal Albert Hall show; Tina McGee, taken by her friend Andra Phelan; an excited Lisa Solomon, who followed Bruce to the airport after the Charlotte show to get this picture; Adam Moore, who had the photo taken in Louisville and signed in Cincinnati; Bob Bader captured Bruce's delight at his new *Macarena* video, a generous gift from Josh Jacobson; one of New York's Finest, Brendan Nolan, who told Bruce, "Hey, not *every* cop beats a guy."



Mansion on the Hill

The Fred Goodman Interview



CECILIA SCHMIDT PHOTO

When Fred Goodman set out to write a book on how art and business worked within the music business, he says he instantly thought of the relationship between Bruce Springsteen and his manager Jon Landau. Goodman's *The Mansion on the Hill* is subtitled "Dylan, Young, Geffen, Springsteen, and the Head-on Collision of Rock and Commerce," and though the book does focus on Neil Young and Bob Dylan (and their respective managers), by far the bulk of the narrative concerns either Springsteen or Landau. The tome also includes interviews with Springsteen's former lighting director Marc Brickman, Bruce's former A&R man Peter J. Philbin, and Little Steven Van Zandt.

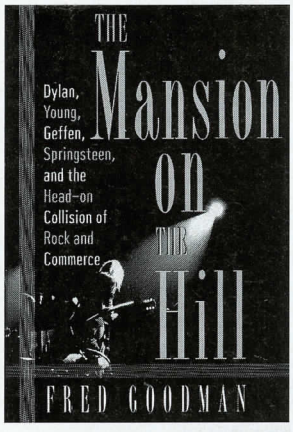
Since the book was released earlier this year, it's become both a must-read book for any Springsteen fan and one of the most talked-about books concerning the music industry since *Hitmen*. The book has generated quite a bit of press—most of it positive—and much of that press concerns what Goodman has to say about Bruce Springsteen and his manager. "*The Mansion on the Hill* deflates the myths that have been built up around artists such as the sainted Springsteen, and elevates the singer's largely anonymous manager to the level of a kingmaker," wrote Greg Kot in the *Chicago Tribune*. Goodman is a former editor at *Rolling Stone* who has written for numerous music and business publications. He spoke with *Backstreets*' **Charles R. Cross** from his New York home.

Why did you choose to make Bruce Springsteen one of the characters in *The Mansion on the Hill?* What interested you about him?

I wrote about him for a couple of reasons. First of all, I like his music and I think he's a significant artist. And he's certainly worth talking about. I've also been very interested in Jon Landau who I think is just as interesting to me. My background is sort of unusual in that I've done both music criticism and I've covered the industry as a business. So I've had two careers—one as a music critic, and one as a business reporter. And talking about Bruce Springsteen and Jon Landau is a good way to combine those two interests. And I find them both fascinating.

There's a lot of information you disclose about Jon Landau, particularly his early years, that hasn't been talked about much before. Why has his background been somewhat mysterious?

I think Jon's role with Bruce Springsteen is really complicated. I tried to do it justice because I think there's a lot to talk about from every angle. I was very concerned, when I did this book, about the fact that Bruce Springsteen is a guy who is really beloved by a lot of people and there's also a tendency to perceive a person's work as equivalent to the person.



What the work *is* ends up being the image of the person. I don't think that Bruce Springsteen is bad, I just think he's more complicated than the image. I never wanted to convey the impression that I think he's a phony, or that I think this guy is not entitled to his success. There was a part of me that thought the picture is far more complicated than what generally gets talked about. And how do we talk about the complexity?

Jon, to me, is a guy who is very complex and you can talk about his complexity because it's apparent. A great deal of the stuff I presented was in the public record. Some of my primary material included interviews that Jon had given years and years ago, before he became Bruce Springsteen's manager. He gave a very long two-part interview in the early '70s to *Fusion* magazine which was a major source for my book about a lot of his relationship with the MC5 and Jerry Wexler. He wasn't secretive about it.

My book is essentially about how art and commerce intersect. Jon Landau is one of the few guys with a real appreciation for both art and commerce and a real flair for both of them. He really is sort of the centerpiece of the book, I think, more than Bruce.

Though *The Mansion on the Hill* really doesn't have a central character; it's about how you start with a bunch of hippies in places like San Francisco and Boston and you end up with Sony and Time Warner. How do you get from A to Z? How does something that's supposed to challenge commercial expectations wind up being solely about commercial success? There's sort of a non-musical question to that: When you're 16 years old you swagger around and say you're never going to be your parents. Then you end up at 35, and how do you make the argument that you're not your parents? So those are the issues the book deals with rather than dealing with any one person. But rather than make the book an encyclopedia, you look for a couple of people who can take you that whole distance, between A and Z. In that respect guys like David Geffen and Jon Landau, and Bob Dylan and Bruce Springsteen, and Albert Grossman, really fit the bill.

What kind of response have you gotten from either Bruce Springsteen, Jon Landau or the Springsteen camp?

There's really nothing to respond to. Jon Landau has not said anything publicly. The only remarks that have been made publicly by anyone associated with the Springsteen camp have been by Dave Marsh. And Dave Marsh's remarks have been pointedly not about the book. Every time he's spoken about the book, that I know of, he's started out by saying "I haven't read the book." So he's not criticizing the book, he's criticizing me. And I'm not going to play that.

Your comments in *The Mansion on the Hill* about Marsh do seem tangential in that he's not a musician or a producer/manager, and your comments are pointed.

He is a tangent. He's about two pages in a 400 page book and it's mostly other rock critics who find that interesting: "Oh, look what he said

about Dave Marsh." I gave him all the attention he deserved—he doesn't deserve much more than that. There is, however, a point to be made here. The press, like rock 'n' roll, has come a long way, and a lot of it is not good. If you go back to the roots of the rock press, a lot of the coverage is art criticism and then it turns into a left wing political debate.

Aside from *Rolling Stone* and *Crawdaddy*, the book talks a good deal about the *Boston Phoenix*, which was an underground newspaper. And that's where guys like Jon Landau wrote and where serious rock 'n' roll journalism flourished. These papers were meant to challenge all sorts of conventions of what accounted for reporting. One of the basic tenets of what accounted for underground journalism was that the objective stance was a sham, that what passes for objectivity limits the discussion to the status quo. What strikes me is that, in many cases, this sort of devolves in the case of something like Dave Marsh's treatment of Bruce Springsteen, into a sort of self-serving feather bedding. Which is completely different than the notion of "let's increase dialogue, discussion." Dave stakes no claim to objectivity and certainly has none. But he's not doing the reader any service, he's just doing himself a service. At the end of the day, Dave Marsh does Bruce Springsteen no service. If Bruce Springsteen is everything that Dave Marsh says he is, then there's no place for someone like Dave Marsh, to throw roses in front of him, on the payroll.

The Springsteen part of the book ends with *Born in the USA*. And in the Springsteen world that's ancient history. You talk a lot about Landau's influence on Bruce in taking him to see John Ford movies and urging him to read certain books. Do you think the book forecasts Bruce's *The Ghost of Tom Joad* album?

Is it forecast by interest or is it forecast by *Human Touch* and *Lucky Town* not being hit records? I don't think you can answer that and I don't think it matters. Where I do close, it is appropriate because it closes that chapter. That thing about how popular music goes from challenging conventions and challenging mainstream expectations to reaping the benefits of embracing them. And I think that's ultimately what the *Born in the USA* tour is about. I hope that Bruce Springsteen makes great albums the rest of his life. That's all I hope for the guy.

You interviewed Steve Van Zandt. How important a role do you feel he played in the story of Springsteen's development?

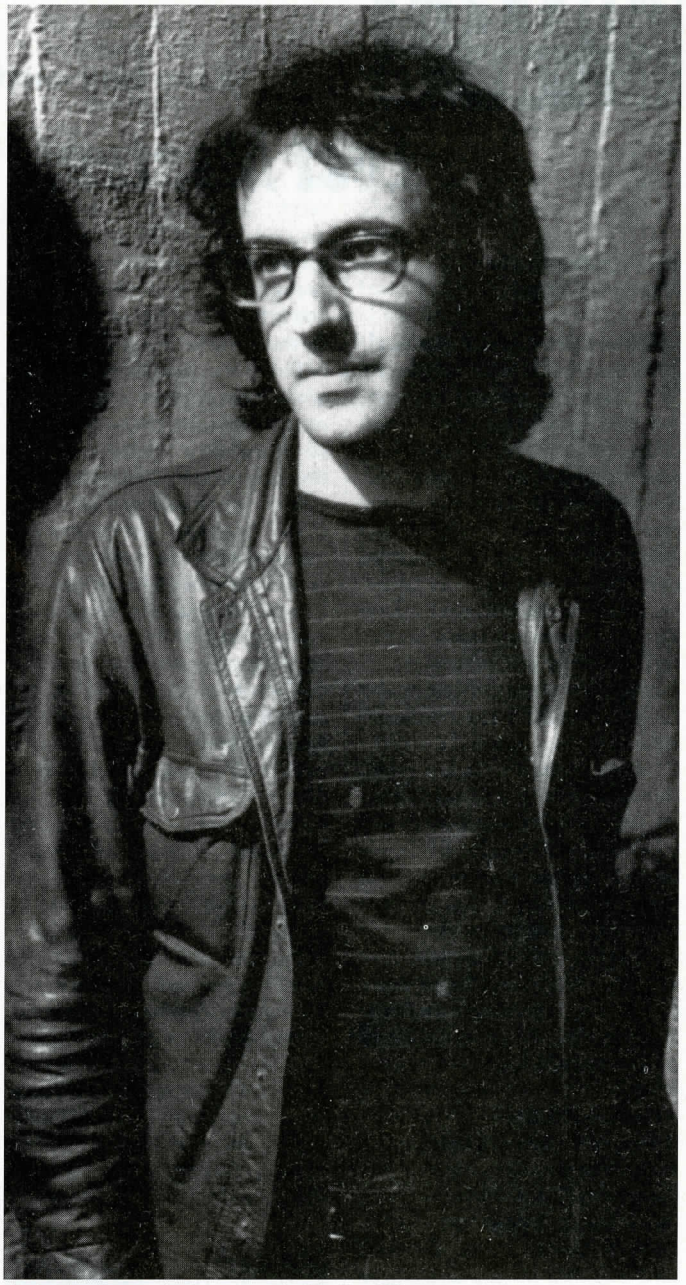
It's hard to say. I'm not down on Bruce using Steve Van Zandt as a foil or Jon Landau as a source for information. Artists will get information wherever they can, whether they get it from a book, or another artist, or they get it from a teacher, it doesn't matter. The question is, what do they do with it?

To me, Steven is really very emblematic of that whole blue-collar working class approach. That's what he talked about to me. It was very much the notion of, "Hey, we think we're the best band in the world, let's prove it." And I have since heard a story about a discussion with the E Street Band where at one point they switched the billing on a couple of posters to "Bruce Springsteen *with* the E Street Band." And it was Steve Van Zandt who grabbed Bruce and said, "That's wrong. You're the lead singer *in* the E Street Band. It's 'Bruce Springsteen *and* the E Street Band.' You're *in* the band." I think Steven wants that band the way no one else wants that band. That's my impression. He invests it with a certain meaning and drive. I think he's really important. He has a romantic view of Bruce and what they are all doing.

The other artists the book focuses on are Bob Dylan and Neil Young, along with their managers. How did you come up with these other two and did you consider how they each related to each other?

To me, Dylan is the great liberator. If I had anything to do over in this book, it would be to emphasize Bob Dylan more. Which was obviously not the way I felt when I started the book. We all talk about Bob Dylan, and we all say he's great, but I just don't think the guy has gotten his due. I don't think we should be comparing him to U2 or Bruce Springsteen. I think he should be compared to Picasso. He's the guy who takes what is essentially a pop trivial medium—which is about going to the dance, going out with your girlfriend, and whatever Chuck Berry was singing about—and he makes it capable of discussing anything. He has the power to make it really stand up and go into all stuff with this. And for that alone he's the artist of a generation. And I don't just mean that among musicians. I can't think of a filmmaker, or a painter, or a writer that's more important than this guy. I think that gets lost a lot. He's been cheapened because everyone has spent so much time talking about "The New Dylan." Bruce Springsteen got tagged with that and he didn't like it. It's a cheap shorthand that people use a lot.

What I found attractive about Neil Young—and certainly I don't feel Neil Young is an artist on the level of Dylan—there's something attractive about Neil Young because he's a guy who time after time after time is willing to fail in public because he's trying to do what he wants to do. And that's not the mark of someone who is thinking about their career.



MICHAEL DOBO PHOTO, FROM *THE MANSION ON THE HILL*

Jon Landau, "a guy who is very complex," in May 1971.

I think that's ultimately one of the things that gets under my skin a little about the Springsteen and Landau equation. There's an awful lot of time and energy, not just thinking about the career (because there's nothing wrong with that), but they spend just as much time and energy pretending that they never think about the career. Which is just crap. We always talked about the business of the Beatles and the business of the Rolling Stones, and it never affects whether we think the records are good or bad. Why can't we do the same thing with Bruce Springsteen?

I covered the music business for a long time. When Madonna or some savvy person like that has a project to do, they do research. They look at photographs, they listen to records, they try and cop images. They look at paintings and they borrow off that stuff. I find that not objectionable. I find it a bit more objectionable when it's Woody Guthrie. Why? What did Woody Guthrie mean? It means something that's done without commercial aspirations. It's music done solely to uplift people. Not to make money. Not to create careers. And I think it's a vastly different business between being Woody Guthrie and being in the business of looking like Woody Guthrie. I don't think those two things have anything in common. There's something about copping that that gets under my skin. It's kind of like wrapping yourself in the flag. You just don't do it.

ON COLLECTING

Live box outtakes surface

Lost Masters, the Final Round

By Richard Breton and Lynn Elder

For the benefit of our readers, *Backstreets* magazine provides ratings of unauthorized releases currently in circulation. Don't write us asking where these can be obtained. *Backstreets* in no manner, shape, or form endorses these recordings. These reviews are provided by our columnists solely for informational purposes. Despite these words of warning, some collectors will still seek this material out, and for those collectors, our reviews should help you steer clear of the real losers.

Unauthorized CDs are growing in numbers and with that growth, expect some real ripoffs—our advice is let the buyer beware, and demand to listen to material before you buy it. Each title here has been rated for packaging, performance, and sound quality on a scale from one to ten, one being awful, and ten being quality generally found on legitimate releases.

•The Lost Masters
(Labour Of Love 1CD each)
Packaging: 6
Sound Quality: 8-9
Performance: Varies

Since *Backstreets* #54, the final nine volumes of this series have been released to bring the total to 19, not counting the *Essential Collection* compilation which was previously reviewed in *Backstreets* along with the first ten volumes. For this review, let's group the last nine volumes into five categories: home demos (Volumes 7 and 9), studio demos (Volume 16), band rehearsals (Volumes 12, 13 and 15), *Darkness* outtakes (Volumes 2 & 3), and the cream of the crop, the original *Nebraska* tape (Volume 1).

•*Volume VII: Stockton Boy (Solo Masters Volume I)*
•*Volume IX: Love Is A Gun (Solo Masters Volume III)*

On both of these, it's just Bruce and guitar in front of a single microphone and a tape deck recorded from 1979 through 1981, but mostly from 1979. Of all the acoustic home demo discs in this series, the *Stockton Boy* disc is the best. Unfortunately that's not saying a lot; there are plenty of throwaway tracks here, like the four takes of "Stockton Boy" and another called "Stockton Girls." But there are quite a few fun moments too: early acoustic versions of "Two Hearts" and "All I Need," a couple of reggae-flavored takes of "You Can Look (But You Better Not Touch)," "Whitetown" (aka "Mr. Outside") as well as an earlier version with different lyrics called "You Gotta Be Kind," a song called "Fade to Black" with a melody line and some words that would eventually become "Follow That Dream," and the obviously Buddy Holly-influenced "Love's Gonna Be Tonight."

The *Love is a Gun* disc doesn't fare nearly as well. While it may have a few worthwhile songs like "Bring on the Night" and "Take 'Em as They Come," a lot the songs are mere sketches of ideas later abandoned. To call "Walking on the Avenue" an embryonic version of "Out in the Street" is too kind.

•*Volume XVI: Hollywood Hills Garage Tapes (Unreleased Masters Volume I)*

While these are still demos, Bruce is using additional studio equipment, some to good effect (background/harmony vocals and guitars) and some not used as well (synths & drum machine). The set starts off with yet another take of "Don't Back Down" and there's also another cut of the rockabilly "Sugarland," both of which use the same dreaded drum machine program that distracts tremendously from the songs. There's a country version of "Sugarland," as well as both a rock and slow acoustic "Johnny Bye Bye" that are great, although not too different from what has appeared on other discs in the series.

The cream of the crop is the complete version of "Shut Out the Light" with two extra verses, and a couple of controversial songs called "Fugitive's Dream" and "The Klansman." "Fugitive's Dream" details a story of a married man: another man comes to his house and brings up something the husband did years ago. The husband lets the man in, but late at night the husband cannot sleep and goes to where the man is sleeping; he touches the man's cheek, is frightened by his thoughts and runs from the house, ending up in a motel to sort out his feelings. Musically, this song would not be out of place on *Nebraska* or *The Ghost of Tom Joad*. Thematically and lyrically, with lines like "I walk the streets at night, a stranger to myself," it's not that far from "Streets of Philadelphia." "The Klansman" is a short and curiously ambiguous song concerning a young boy whose father and older brother belong to the KKK. One version of "Don't Back Down" uses the same tune as "The Klansman" which transforms it into a more serious song. The strangest song is "Seven Tears," about a man whose wife of seven years has left him, and he now has seven tears tattooed on his face. The tune is the same as "Little Girl," albeit a bit slower, with lines like "I went down to my gypsy man, and he said 'Son, I understand.'"

•*Volume XII: Buddy Holly Revisited (The Telegraph Hill Rehearsals Volume II)*
•*Volume XIII: Restless Days (The Telegraph Hill Rehearsals Volume III)*
•*Volume XV: Slow Fade (The Telegraph Hill Rehearsals Volume V)*

This is Bruce and the band with a single microphone and tape deck from 1979-80. These band rehearsal discs can be both tedious and rewarding, but mostly they are immensely frustrating since Bruce's vocals are all but drowned out by the band most of the time. If you combine the tracks from all these discs together, you'll find there are only ten different songs represented. The most interesting are "Living on the Edge" (two takes), "Chevrolet Deluxe" (two takes), "Restless Nights" (a whopping 13 takes) and "Slow Fade" (six takes). "Restless Nights" doesn't seem to evolve much at the start, but towards the end Bruce and the band are trying out different guitar and organ leads which are interesting. "Chevrolet Deluxe" doesn't resemble the acoustic demo much at all, and it's really nice. "Slow Fade" is hot—when the whole band is playing it cooks. Of course, like most of the acoustic demos, a significant amount of what's on these discs don't lend themselves to repeated listenings, so it's better to listen through once and make a tape of the best stuff.

•*Volume II: One Way Street (Darkness Masters Volume I)*
•*Volume III: Rattling the Chains (Darkness Masters Volume II)*

Now we're getting to some really good stuff. Most of these outtakes have appeared before on other boots, but never in such sound quality. *One Way Street* starts out with the previously unbooted song "One Way Out"

Ratings:

Volume I	★★★★★
Volume II	★★★★
Volume III	★★★★
Volume VII	★★★
Volume IX	★★
Volume XII	★★
Volume XIII	★★
Volume XV	★★
Volume XVI	★★★★

which is similar to "Candy's Boy." The alternate "Drive All Night" is really great with more keyboards—in fact, it sounds like Bruce is playing a solo piano version with Danny just providing color on the organ. This disc also has killer versions of "Frankie" and "The Promise."

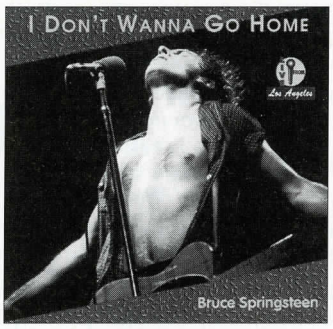
Rattling the Chains also contains some real gems, like "Prove It All Night" with most of the lyrics to "Something in the Night," an early (and previously unbooted) "Independence Day," a couple of additional takes of "Racing in the Street," hot versions of "Badlands" and "Adam Raised a Cain," and "Spanish Eyes."

•*Volume I: Alone in Colt's Neck (The Complete* Nebraska *Session)*

This disc supposedly contains a copy of the legendary original *Nebraska* tape Bruce recorded at home and carried around in his pocket for a while. While one would assume that the songs on here are the ones that actually made up *Nebraska*, that's not always the case—even the version of "Nebraska" here is different. But the real finds are the songs that didn't make the album. The first one is "Born in the U.S.A." which musically doesn't resemble the acoustic versions done on the current tour but has all the lyrics. Next is "Downbound Train" which is taken at a faster pace and is not as powerful as the version on *Born in the USA*

The best of the unreleased tracks is "Losin' Kind," which is lyrically similar to "Highway 29" (boy meets girl, boy drives off with girl and parties, boy robs a bar and kills the bartender, boy and girl get in a chase and wreck the car, etc.) and musically resembles "Straight Time." It's a stunning song. There's a great slow acoustic version of "Pink Cadillac" that simmers. "Deputy" is actually "Highway Patrolman," but it's a different take. The final song on the *Nebraska* tape is "Child Bride" which eventually evolved (with lyric changes) into "Working on the Highway."

The disc is filled out with very short solo acoustic covers of "Dream Baby" and "Precious Memories"/"When the Moon Comes Over the Mountain" and short snippets of different takes of "Nebraska." If you love *Nebraska*, you *need* this disc.



•I Don't Wanna Go Home
(E. St. Records, 2CD)
Packaging: 8
Sound Quality: 7
Performance: 8

This set includes a large portion of the 8/24/81 show from the Los Angeles Sports Arena from a decent soundboard tape. The bonus tracks, which strangely appear at the beginning of the set, are taken from the inaugural stand at the Meadowlands (Brendan Byrne) Arena in New Jersey from July 1981.

After the bonus tracks, the main show starts by fading in around the end of "Cadillac Ranch" and fades out during "Twist and Shout," so what you get is most of the second set, as well as the encores. Highlights include "Johnny Bye Bye" (which during the *River* tour was closer to an outtake called "Let's Go Tonight" than the version of this song from the *Born in the USA* tour), a truly great version of "Point Blank," a "Jersey Girl" duet with Tom Waits and Bruce trading verses, and a fine "Devil with the Blue Dress" medley which included "You Can't Sit Down," "Sweet Soul Music" and "Shake."

Unfortunately, along with the fade-in and fade-out already described, there's a minor edit during "Rosalita" and a larger edit in "Growin' Up." There are also a few small drop-outs.

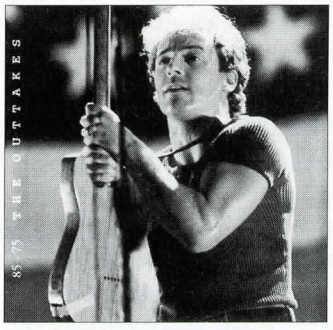
This is certainly not the best-sounding soundboard tape of a *River* tour show, but it's not the worst either. Since the most interesting bits of this show (as well as the bonus tracks) have been previously released, albeit in slightly lesser quality, I'm not sure if there's enough left to have justified this release. If you don't have any part of this show, or any of the July '81 New Jersey bonus tracks, this set could be recommended for "Point Blank" and most of the bonus tracks alone.

•Tom Joad Blues
(E. St. Records, 2CD)
Packaging: 9
Sound Quality: 9
Performance: 9

This is the first complete show to surface from the fall '96 US tour, and it's a great one. After opening the fall leg on the East Coast the previous week, Bruce played three dates in Ohio and Michigan which preceded the Woody Guthrie tribute concert in Cleveland (see review for *USA Blues Vol. 2*). The shows during this week were particularly memorable, especially with Bruce was trying out some Woody Guthrie songs he was planning to play that weekend.

This is from the middle show that week, held at the E. J. Thomas hall in Akron, Ohio, on 9/25/96. For the first time this tour Bruce doesn't open with, or even play, "The Ghost of Tom Joad." Instead he opens the show with Woody Guthrie's "Tom Joad" and it's a killer. Other highlights include "Murder Incorporated," a nice coupling between "Little Things" ("...speaking of tongues...") and "Red Headed Woman," the first performance of "Shut Out the Light" this tour, "Reason to Believe," and the rarely played "The New Timer." Even "Youngstown" makes an appearance, an inexplicable rarity during the fall tour.

The sound is excellent, the performance is great, and the packaging (especially the picture discs) is better than usual from E. St. Records. Highly recommended.



•85-75 The Outtakes
(Catch 22, 2CD)
Packaging: 4
Sound Quality: 10
Performance: 9

If one is to believe the title and packaging, these are outtakes that were not used in the official *Bruce Springsteen and the E Street Band Live/1975-85* set released in 1986. It's unclear just how far along in the process these cuts were, but the important thing here is the sound—which is indeed excellent and for the most part lives up to the hype. There are 20 tracks taken from six different shows ranging from 1978 to 1985.

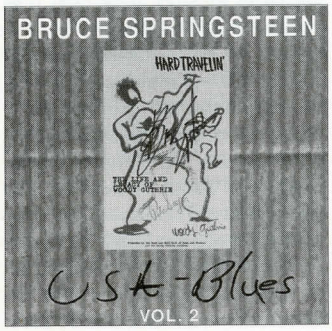
The set starts off with the first four songs from the 12/29/80 show at Nassau Coliseum and the sound mix is much more balanced than that of any circulating tapes or CDs. The next four songs are from early in the second set on 9/21/78 at the Capitol Theater in Passaic, NJ. The sound quality here will just blow you away, especially on the performance of "Because the Night" which is better than what was used on *Live/1975-85*.

Four songs are taken from the 12/16/78 Winterland show (listed erroneously as taken from the 12/15 show which was broadcast) including a great "Santa Claus is Coming to Town" with long story intro. Other shows found on the set include "Glory Days" from the 8/19/84 Meadowlands show, the final four songs from the 8/22/85 Giants Stadium show which include the "Twist and Shout/Do You Love Me" encore (with Little Steven on three of the songs), and three songs from the 9/30/85 show at the Los Angeles Coliseum.

On the downside, the full-band version of "Thunder Road" is faded in well into the piano intro—apparently whoever compiled the tape thought the song doesn't begin until Bruce starts playing the harmonica. And while the mix for the 12/29/80 tracks is better than Crystal Cat's *Coliseum Night*, some will still prefer the overall sound of the latter which is somewhat brighter. There are a couple of pops in "Dancing in the Dark" and sometimes the mix can accentuate any mistakes by Bruce and the band. The packaging is rather poor, particularly the discs themselves which seem flimsier than other CDs. And it's too bad the 1978 version of "Prove it All Night," which was rumored to have been either left off at the last minute and/or readied as a possible b-side, isn't included.

While one could argue with the song selection, that's beside the point. Of the shows included on this set, all but two were rep-

resented in some fashion on the *Live/1975-85* set. Ten of the song titles found here didn't even make it to the official set, so it's nice to finally have release-quality live versions of "Out in the Street," "Who'll Stop the Rain," "Point Blank," "Jungleland" and "Twist and Shout/Do You Love Me." We can only hope Bruce will release a "from the vaults" series one day, especially with stuff like this in the can. But until then, this will do.



•USA Blues Vol. 2
(Crystal Cat)
Packaging: 8
Sound Quality: 8
Performance: 8

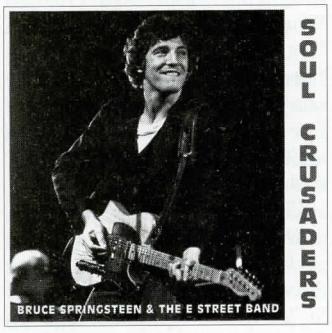
This isn't so much a follow-up to the original *USA Blues* title released years ago than a convenient way to put all Bruce-related tracks from the tribute concert for Woody Guthrie in one place. The CD is filled out with rarely played or one-off songs from the first three weeks of the fall tour.

On 9/29/96 Bruce, along with several other artists, participated in a tribute concert for Woody Guthrie sponsored by the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and held in Severance Hall in Cleveland, Ohio. For this show, Springsteen played several Woody Guthrie songs alone and participated in duets and all-star sing-a-longs near the end of the show. He also played one of his own songs, but more on this later.

Bruce opened with Guthrie's "Tom Joad," and then performed a couple of duets with Joe Ely on "Blowin' Down the Road" and "Oklahoma Hills," the latter also including Arlo Guthrie and Ramblin' Jack Elliot. Also performed by Bruce solo were the children's song "Car Car" (with appropriate comments from Bruce concerning "car" songs) and "Plane Wreck at Los Gatos (Deportees)." The final song of Bruce's set was a particularly moving version of "Across the Border" for which the audience was awed into utter silence. The all-star sing-a-long songs at the end of the show, "Hard Travelin'" and "I Got to Know," offer minimal Bruce.

Next up are the bonus tracks from early in the fall tour which include "Homestead" with Joe Gruchecky from Pittsburgh, "My Father's House" from Connecticut, and a funny new song called "In Michigan" from Kalamazoo. The final three songs are from Minneapolis and include "Shut Out the Light," a great "Born in the U.S.A." (with new slide guitar beginning) and the funny new song "There Will Never Be Any Other for Me but You" (which premiered in Providence).

The sound throughout is great. The performances of "Tom Joad" and "Deportees" fall a bit short of performances of the same songs earlier in the week., and the duet with Joe Ely on "Blowin' Down the Road" very nearly unravels at one point. Everything else is great. The packaging is up to Crystal Cat's usual high standards. Recommended.



•Soul Crusaders
(E. St. Records, 2CD)
Packaging: 6
Sound Quality: 7
Performance: 8

Back in 1977, Bruce and the E Street Band, augmented by the Miami Horns, went on a short tour before the judgment for the lawsuit with Mike Appel was finalized which would allow recording to begin for *Darkness on the Edge of Town*. Many fans look back at this two-month tour with fondness and marvel at the amount of passion in the performances. Here is one of the better audience recordings of a fine show from early in this tour at the Maple Leaf Gardens Concert Bowl in Toronto, Canada on 2/13/77. It's more or less a complete show, if you don't count missing a bit of the beginnings of both "Tenth Avenue Freeze-Out" and "Jungleland" which are intact on most circulating tapes.

Highlights include "Mona/She's the One," "Growin' Up," "Backstreets" and "Jungleland." The Miami Horns are used to great advantage on "Tenth Avenue Freeze-Out," "Action in the Street," "Rosalita" and the final encores of "Raise Your Hand" and "Born to Run," the latter truly capturing the "wall of sound" live. "Something in the Night" opens the second set, and has lyrical changes not on the final version which will appear later in some versions of the "Sad Eyes" portions of "Backstreets."

On the whole the sound is better than most circulating tapes of this show, with better clarity and almost non-existent tape hiss. While Bruce easily surpasses this performance later in the tour, this is still a fine set. And it's nice to see the '77 shows finally given their due.

•Independence Night
(Crystal Cat, 3CD)
Packaging: 8
Sound Quality: 8-9
Performance: 10

This is a great reissue of the 7/4/85 Wembley show originally put out years ago as *Independence Day* by Great Dane Records. While the original was a fine set, this release has two things going for it: improved sound and six bonus tracks that include the only live performance of the Beach Boys' "When I Grow Up to Be a Man" from the 6/1/85 show at Slane Castle in Ireland.

For those who don't know, this is an exceptional show from the European *Born in the U.S.A* tour with 30 songs. Bruce opens the show with an acoustic "Independence Day," "Seeds" (which was debuted the previous night) is played live for the second time, and Little Steven is present for the final three songs, including "Two Hearts" and "Ramrod." Other highlights include "Trapped," "Because the Night" and a cover of Elvis's "Can't Help Falling in Love." Additional bonus tracks include "Shut Out the Light" and "Follow That Dream" from the UK stand. Although the packaging falls a bit short of the original Great Dane issue, it's not the packaging that will sell this set, it's the sound. Recommended.

•Freehold Night
(Crystal Cat, 2CD)
Packaging: 9
Sound Quality: 7
Performance: 10

This set beautifully documents Bruce's special hometown show on 11/8/96 in Freehold, NJ, played at the St. Rose of Lima Grammar School gymnasium—the very school Bruce attended. This show was restricted to Freehold Borough residents only, but through the magic of DAT is now for everyone. And given the place, a set list full of surprises, and special guests helping out on stage, it's a marvelous show.

The special guests include Soozie Tyrell on violin on six songs and Patti Scialfa on background vocals on three. Soozie lends a mournful violin to the surprise opening song, "The River," and it soars. Both Patti and Soozie help out on "Mansion on the Hill" as well as two other tour debuts, "Two Hearts" and "When You're Alone." Soozie shows up again later for a couple more surprises, "My Hometown" and "Racing in the Street."

If this isn't enough to entice you, other surprise tour debuts include "Open All Night," "Used Cars," "Growin' Up," and a touching new song called "In Freehold" written for the occasion that will have you both laughing and misty-eyed. Just about every song is introduced with a story as well, and the references to people and places in Freehold make this show unique. All this along with most of the songs from the current tour make for the longest show so far at just over two and a half hours—25 songs in all.

The sound is not as good as other shows from this tour—but few shows were more magical, and the sound is better than expected for an old school gymnasium. The packaging is great and includes articles and pictures related to the show. Run, don't walk, to get this one, folks.

CLASSIFIEDS

PERSONALS

CASEY ANN HAUGHIN, 3/6/97, WELCOME TO THE world, our beautiful daughter. "In a world so hard and dirty, so fouled and confused, searching for a little of God's mercy, I found Living Proof."

CAROLYN: MY SPECIAL ONE, TWO HEARTS ARE better than one, two hearts, girl, get the job done. Love, Roger.

WASHINGTON D.C. AREA SPRINGSTEEN FANS wanted for monthly get-togethers. Talk Bruce, trade tapes, and plan trips to shows!Flynn, (301) 871-5280 or fmclean@aspensys.com

"ONE SOFT INFESTED SUMMER ME AND TERRY became friends...." Terry Toner, call me... (203) 876-7762. Mike Irwin, "one of the guys."

SCOTT: HOPE TO SEE YOU AGAIN ONE DAY SOON. Until then, keep racing in the street. Debbie in NJ.

BOOK AUTHORS: EXPERIENCED INDEXER available. Please call Nancy Humphries at (510) 658-5724.

NOBODY KNOWS, HONEY, WHERE LOVE GOES. But when it goes it's gone, gone.

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WANTED: GRAMMYS '97 VIDEO TAPE. PLEASE call Bob Colville, (201) 729-8752.

WANTED: MELISSA ETHERIDGE CDS, PHOTOS, magazines—absolutely anything. Other Springsteen/Etheridge fans please write: Tracey Simpson, 2 Glassford Tower, Motherwell, SCOTLAND ML1 2AU.

HAVE LOVE, WILL TRAVEL. VETERAN FAN FROM Main Point days looking for one (or two) great seat(s) to any show. Rick, (215) 977-8334.

WANTED: TICKET/TICKETSTUBS TO BRUCE shows, all countries & years, willing to trade or purchase. Tom McManus, 905 Muirfield Ave., Waukegan, IL 60085. (847) 336-8721, FAX (847) 263-0826.

WANTED: 1975 TIME OR NEWSWEEK WITH Springsteen cover. Scott Shuster, (860) 548-2637.

GERMAN BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN FANS WANTS TO trade videos from the boss. I have material from the last 20 years. Lots of very good quality shots.I can convert any Videosystem. Please send list to: Thomas Winter, A. Miersch Str. 26, 60528 Frankfurt, Germany, or e-mail me: Thomas.Winter@frankfurt.netsurf.de or call me: +49 69 67 87 417 around the clock.

ISO BRUCE IN PITTSBURGH, 76/84/96. HAVE 800 hours of Bruce/others in audio. YLGM. K. Jevsevar, 68 High St., Etna, PA 15223.

TAPES FOR TRADE: BRUCE, DYLAN, NEIL, others. Quality over quantity. Jeff Miller, 2721 t St. #5, Sacramento, CA 95816.

WANTED: HOME VIDEOS TAKEN OF BRUCE IN parking lot after Freehold 11/8/96 at St. Rose. I may be in it! Call Joey (908) 237-9696 or e-mail bigmuddy@juno.com.

LOOKING TO TRADE SPRINGSTEEN AUDIO AND video. Your list gets mine. G.S.P., PO Box 1033, Garden Grove, CA 92842.

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BRUCE RECORDS FOR SALE ON <HTTP://WWW. algonet.se/~lhansson/brucelst.htm>.

BRUCE IMPORTS FOR SALE. LPS, 45S, PIC discs, magazines. SAE for list. Box 520, Windermere, FL 34786.

SPRINGSTEEN TRIBUTE BAND WHO'S THE BOSS, featuring "Mike the Boss" (pictured in Backstreets #50/51, page 40), has conquered Philadelphia and is ready to reach Bruce fans nationwide. New original CD Greetings from Philadelphia, PA available. Call for information, CD discount: (215) 884-9470.

MINT & UNUSED SPRINGSTEEN CONCERT tickets. May 4, 1976, Jackson, MS. Lower Arena: $25 ppd; Floor: $50 ppd. Hein's Rare Collectibles, PO Box 179, Little Silver, NJ 07739. (908) 219-1988, FAX (908) 219-5940. Credit card orders accepted.

HUGE CATALOG OF SPRINGSTEEN CDS. BEST prices and service. Write to: Ten Mile Music, 1960 Cliff Lake Rd., Unit 112-250, Eagan, MN 55122.

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If you're a super fan of Bruce Springsteen, you'll want to check out the *Backstreets* SuperSub, a membership program that includes added services. With membership:

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- **The yearly SuperSub-only *Backstreets* Staff t-shirt.** A new shirt each year, and each design so far has been a winner. As seen in the front rows of most Bruce shows. Be sure to let us know your t-shirt size when you sign up! We usually have M, L, XL, and XXL available.
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Continued from page 5

very serious and heavy. At first, at the show, I found I caught his honest and hearty personality. Later, reading the lyrics, I confirmed the feeling. I was experiencing him twice.

Rumida Nishida
Tokyo, Japan

NO JUSTICE, NO PEACE

Dear Editor:

First of all, a thankyou for putting a picture of me in *Backstreets* #54; it's the closest I've got to Bruce fame yet.

But a "no thankyou" to Jonathan Pont ["Highway Patrol," #54]. While he did mention my web site, I don't feel he did it justice. I'm not downgrading the other sites, I just felt there were things in my site which should have been mentioned rather than it just being cattle-branded "folksy."

The first site Jonathan mentioned is Todd Draper's, the mainstay of that site being its up-to-date *Joad* tour setlists. I've been doing that also and enclosing show reports from each night as I get them, sometimes only hours after the show finishes. End result: not mentioned.

I have been keeping a news section lately as well (since June 1996) which isn't bad, sometimes quotes from the *Backstreets* web site, but is a helpful record of things recent for newbies to read. Again, not mentioned.

As for his Jersey Devil animation whine, this is anal beyond belief. It's meant to be a small joke and it's only on the front page; if he hits down once it's off screen. Plus, as any competent browser-user knows, you just have to hit "stop" to make animated gifs stop moving.

I had a really good laugh when he said that Fabian's site [the Dutch Springsteen site] makes good use of the technology (implying mine is bad), since I told Fabian (who is an friend of mine) about the URL Minder service in the first place! As far as I'm aware, there are in excess of 600 people who are notified as soon as I change my index page and I've not checked that stat for a while. Also, as for Pont's moan about Fabian's joke picture of Bruce with extended nose—what is his problem? It's a genuinely funny picture, and if this is his idea of "disinformation" I shudder to think of what sort of world he inhabits.

Really, I'm honoured to have made the pages of Backstreets with my site, but I put a lot of hours over the last two years into maintaining in and keeping it current and, I hope, interesting. To have it summed up as "folksy" doesn't correspond to my own feelings about it's content or the feedback I get from the many people who take the time to fill in my guestbook.

Pete Lambie
Glasgow, Scotland

AVAILABLE FROM BACKSTREET RECORDS

COMPACT DISCS

TOM JOAD LIMITED EDITION *JAPANESE* 2CD SET Released to coincide with Springsteen's shows in Tokyo is this fantastic limited release, combining *The Ghost of Tom Joad* album with the "Missing" CD5. Like the European CD5 below, the "Missing" single contains the rare title track (studio) plus live versions of "Darkness," "Born in the USA," and "Spare Parts" from Berlin. The two CDs are housed in fantastic packaging, a nice cardboard digipak with a "Missing" sticker, lyrics in both English and Japanese, plus an integrated obi.....$40

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FOR TRUE ROCKERS ONLY Back issues of *FTRO*, the UK Boss fanzine from our friends at Badlands. Issue #20 was the last issue before Badlands began publishing *The Ties That Bind*, below. *FTRO* #10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 18, 19, 20, each.....$8

THE TIES THAT BIND The new Bruce mag from our friends at Badlands, basically a smaller version of *FTRO* that will appear more often. #1, #2, #3 and the new double issue #4/5 are now available!.....$4 each, $8 for double issue

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#1 First issue, extremely rare.....$50
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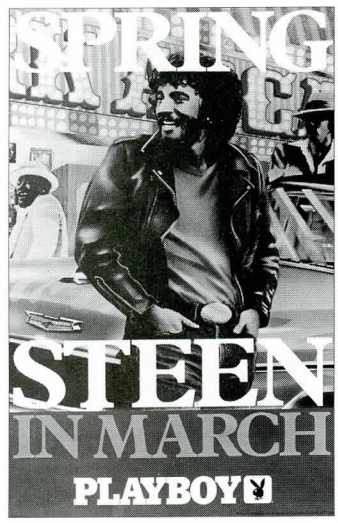
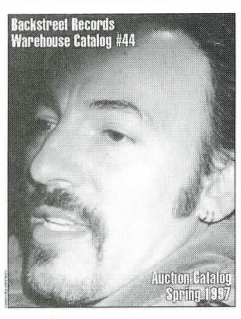


1976 PLAYBOY POSTER

The Playboy poster is considered one of the greatest Springsteen posters ever created, as well as one of the rarest. The reason is that this poster, though promotional, was issued by Playboy (with Columbia approval) to promote their feature and interview with Springsteen in their March 1976 issue. Since it didn't go to record stores, and since Springsteen wasn't that popular at the time, very few copies were preserved. The illustration by artist John Youssi is a stunning and realistic vision of Bruce, on the street, leaning on a Cadillac, and the colors are spectacular. We had some of these a few years back and they proved to be one of our most popular posters ever; we've found another small supply in amazing condition—these suckers are mint—especially considering that these original posters are now 20 years old. These have sold for more than three times this in the past, but we're able to offer this batch at an unbelievably low price.....$100



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